American girl™

March • April 1993

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The All-Animal Issue

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American

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SPECIAL SECTION

Pull-Out Pop-Out Paper Doll #3
Alexandra Forsythe

Erin L. Curran

Meet our cover girl, Erin Curran, age 11, and her furry friend Rebel. Erin loves jazz dancing and books by Beverly Cleary. Rebel loves riding in a car and eating vanilla ice cream! When Erin and Rebel posed for our cover, Rebel lived up to his name. He was supposed to lick Erin's face—but he rebelled and wouldn't do it!

FIND-ITS! Just for fun, be a detective!

Look for the **6** questions hidden throughout the magazine, and see if you can uncover the answers in this issue of *American Girl*.

Answers to games, puzzles, and find-its are on page 37.

Cover-girl photos: CAROL KAPLAN

movies? ***Anywhere it wants!*** 2 **What does a cat like for a treat on a hot day?** ***A mice cream cone.***

Dear American girls,

The great thing about working at a magazine is how much you learn about the world you live in. For two months, the *American Girl* staff has been learning about horses and hamsters, birds and bunnies, snakes and leeches, pelicans and pythons—getting ready to bring you this all-animal issue of *American Girl*. Now we know more about these critters than will fit in the pages of this one issue. For instance, did you know that:

Hats off to pets! American girl London Pyle and her dog Whitney, of Laguna Niguel, California

★ A guinea pig with a cold might feel better after drinking some warm chamomile tea.

★ Mice like music. In fact, a few people have heard mice singing like birds!

★ Never feed your dog chocolate. It contains a substance that can not only make a dog sick but actually kill it.

★ The most popular pet bird is the budgerigar, or budgie, which can learn to talk. One talking budgie was named Sparkie Williams. He knew 531 words, 383 sentences, and eight nursery rhymes!

You'll find lots more critter facts in the pages that follow. We hope you'll learn as many new things as we did—and have as much fun, too!

Your friend,

Nancy Holyke

Nancy Holyke
Editor, *American Girl*

1774 *1854* *1904* *1944*

Felicity, Kirsten, Samantha, and Molly: four American Girls whose stories make history come alive in *American Girl* magazine.

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American girl™

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3 **What dog keeps the best time?** ***A watchdog.*** 4 **What pet always has a big smile?** ***A grinny pig.***

Girls Express

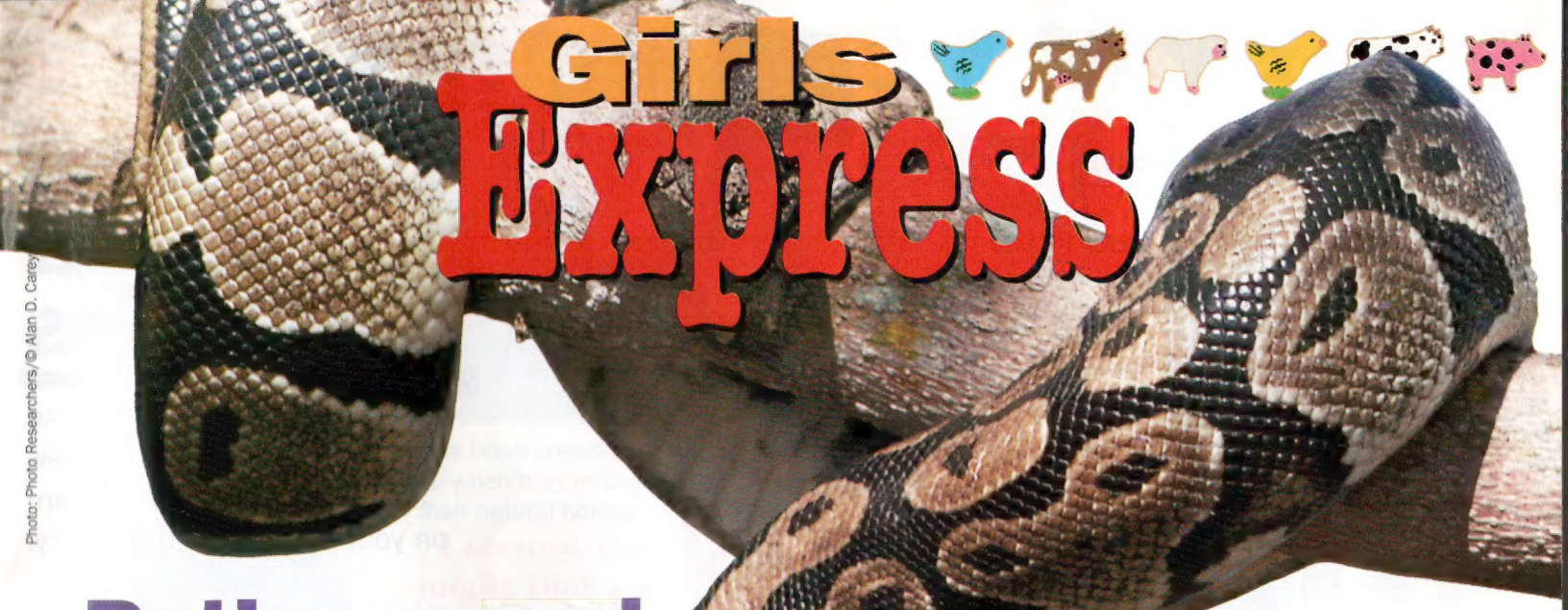


Photo: Photo Researchers/© Alan D. Carey

Pythons and Pelicans

When Ashley Mattingly called home one day last summer, she couldn't help giggling. "Guess what I've got around my neck?" Ashley asked her mother. "A python!"

Believe it or not, Ashley isn't crazy. And she doesn't work at a zoo. Ashley, 11, is one of the youngest volunteers at Treasure Coast Wildlife Hospital, in Hobe Sound, Florida.

Some of the animals at Treasure Coast are sick. Some are injured. Others, like the python, have escaped from their owners. Volunteers like Ashley help the hospital staff take care of the animals, so many can eventually be returned to the wild.

Ashley has helped all kinds of animals, from baby bobcats to pelicans with fishhooks stuck in their beaks. Some nights she even takes her work home. Baby blue jays and mockingbirds have stayed in cages in her bedroom.

"I fed them special pellets with tweezers when they were hungry, which was about every hour before they went to sleep," says Ashley. "It feels neat to hold a bird. They're really soft and cute. But sometimes they jump out of your hand, and you have to catch them!"

At the hospital, Ashley can usually be found preparing lunch for the hawks: piles of raw chicken necks! To feed the hawks, she enters the big cage and sets their food on the ground. "The hawks just stare at you, and they have claws," Ashley says. "They swoop down so suddenly to pick up their food that you have to duck. Sometimes they fly right by you, and you can feel the wind from their wings."

Photo: JIM URIK

Ashley wears a thick glove to feed the pelicans their daily meal of fish.

YIKES!

A python can swallow a 100-pound animal whole. Ashley only weighs 85 pounds!

Pooches and You!

Heidi Renae Schmitt and Ginger, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Nicole Levin and Channelle, South Barrington, Illinois

Genevieve Chavez and Pecas, Arlington, Texas

All-New Animal Stories

Our Trendspotters made these comments about some new animal books. Look for them on your next trip to the library.

Moneymaker

Be a Pet-Sitter

Running a pet-sitting service is a great way to help out your friends and relatives and earn a little cash. Here's how to get your business going:

1. Advertise

Give your busness a name that's so catchy your customers can't get it out of their heads, like Polly's Prancing Pooches. Then make flyers with the name and phone number of your business, and how much you'll charge per day ($1 for small animals; $2 for large animals). Hand out the flyers to relatives and your parents' friends.

2. Get to know the pet

Ask each customer to write down all you'll need to know about taking care of his or her pet. Visit the pet before you start caring for it. Does Sparky like to be scratched behind the ears? Does Misty like her food warmed up? Find out!

3. Give the pet a lot of love

Walk it, pet it, brush it, talk to it, and play games with it if you can. You can even leave the customer a report so he or she knows what you did.

Buzzword

Slip the buzzword into your conversation as often as possible. Dazzle your teachers, share it with friends, see if your parents have any idea what you're talking about. If you hear other girls using the buzzword, you'll know they've been reading *American Girl*, too!

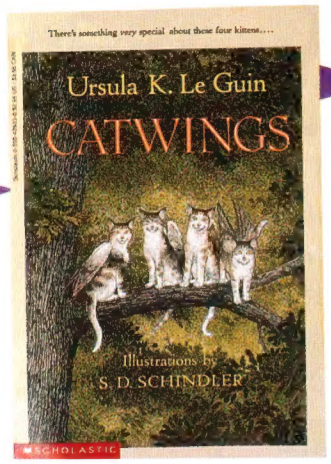
cantankerous

Say it "can-TAN-kuh-russ"

What it means: crabby

One way to use it: "My dog gets cantankerous when I don't feed him on time."

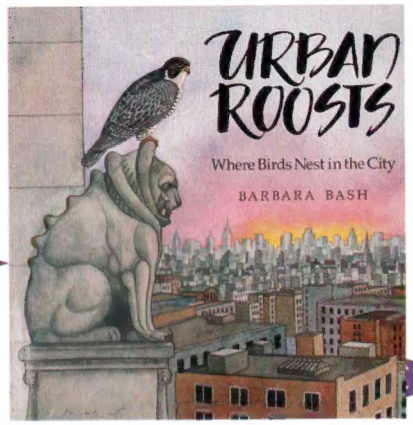
Because the spider spied her. 7 **What do they call baby cats in Alabama?** ***Kittens.*** 8 **Which side**



Thelma, Harriet, Roger, and James are cats with wings. They fly away from the city to find a new home in the woods.

"I liked Harriet the most because she was such a caring and trusting kitten. This book may be too easy for older girls to read, but they will still like the plot."

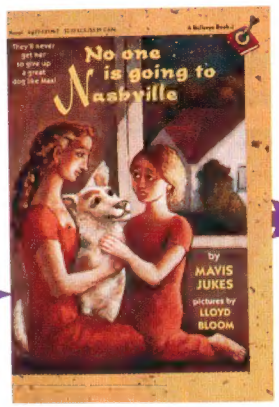
—Kimberlyn Hickman



This book shows you where birds go when they're chased away from their natural homes.

"I learned that you might find a wren's nest built inside a glove. You'll enjoy this book even if you're not into birds."

—Annie Erlandson



Sonia thinks Max the dog would be a perfect pet. Her dad doesn't agree, so Sonia must find a home for Max.

"The funniest part was when Max chewed up the hat. I had the hardest time putting the book down."

—Ashley Plummer

Sophie wants to be a farmer when she grows up. She loves to learn about nature from the animals she finds.

"The picture of Sophie wearing her mother's sunglasses was very funny. The story made me laugh a lot."

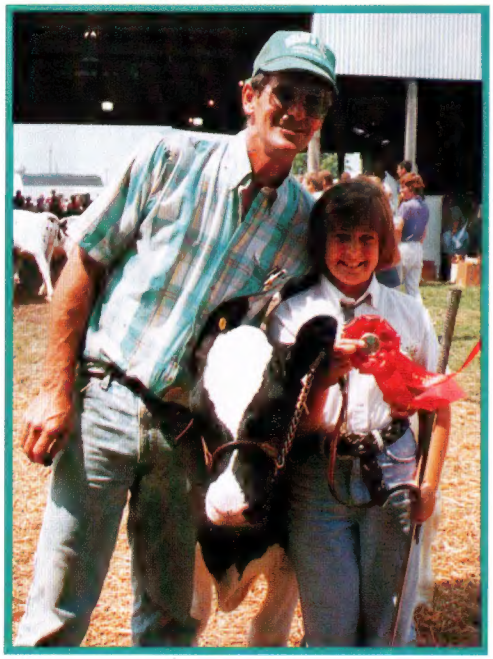
—Kara Waxman

Do you love horses?
You can get four terrific horse posters to hang up in your room by sending two dollars to:

American Quarter Horse Association
P.O. Box 200
Amarillo, TX 79168

of the ostrich has the most feathers? ***The outside!*** **9 What's the difference between a moose and an**

News from You



"This is my third year in the Wood County 4-H. Last summer I showed two dairy cows named Babe Ruth and Spot at the county fair. I won first prize in my class and I placed second for first-year showmanship. I also showed my lamb, named Peanut. I love my animals so much that when I had to sell Peanut I was crying."

—Elizabeth Bostdorff
Bowling Green, Ohio

"I have nine pets—three dogs, four fish, one hermit crab, and one little brother!"

—Jennifer Schanbacher
Merion Station, Pennsylvania

This cat toy is easy to make. Sew pieces of yarn to the fingertips of an old glove. Then sew pom-poms onto the end of each piece of yarn. Your cat will love it!

Photo: Courtesy of Pedigree

Pet Scrapbook

Use construction paper to make a scrapbook about your pet. Here are some things you might include:

- your pet's name and birthday
- nicknames for your pet
- your pet's favorite foods and toys
- paw prints, locks of fur, and "baby" pictures
- funny things your pet does
- the date your pet was housebroken
- the date your pet learned to roll over or do other tricks

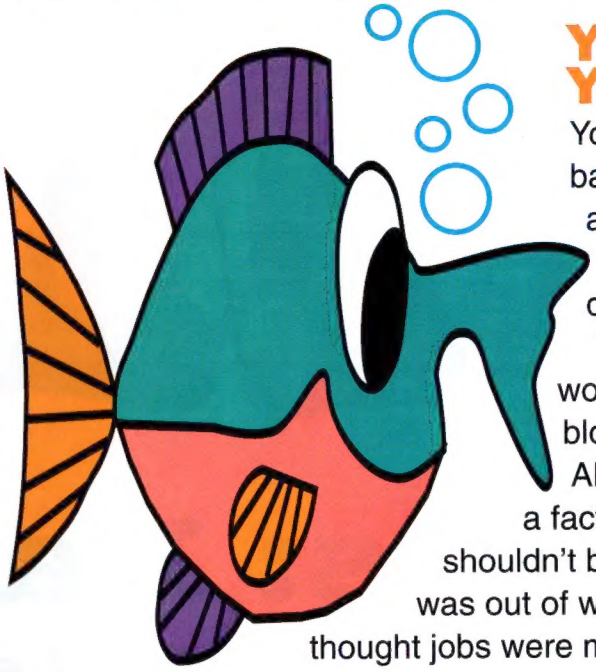
ant? ***A moose has antlers, but an ant doesn't have moose-lers.*** 10 **What goes ZZUB, ZZUB, ZZUB?**

Big-Top Trainer

For the last four years, 10-year-old Jessica Adams from Tampa, Florida, has toured the country with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. She performs with her mom, dad, and seven dogs in as many as three circus shows a day. Her fox terrier is so talented that Jessica trained him to jump over a baton, land on his front paws, and walk with his hind legs in the air!

Since the family travels with the circus 11 months out of the year, Jessica lives in a trailer with her parents and doesn't go to a regular school. Instead, she and the children of other circus performers are taught by a tutor. In her spare time, Jessica likes to hang out with people who train large animals. Sometimes she even gets to ride the elephants!

Photo: Courtesy of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus



Your Voice, Your Choice

Your answers to the official ballot from the Premier Issue are still rolling in! Here's how you voted on one of the questions about animals. You'd hate to see the world's only snorkel-nosed blowfish population hurt. Almost 1,200 of you thought a factory that might hurt the fish shouldn't be built—even if your dad was out of work. Only about 300 of you thought jobs were more important than fish.

Poem

Riding
On animals;
Doing
Exquisite tricks
On horses' backs.

—Beth Faller, Cincinnati, Ohio

Help Wanted! We want to include your tips about babysitting in the July/August issue of *American Girl*. Send them to us by May 1, 1993.

Here's How to Write to Us!

Send news, poems, jokes, riddles, photos, funny stories, moneymaker ideas, and anything else you want to share to this address:

American Girl
Girls Express
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Important: We won't be able to write you back. We wish we could, but we'd never get the next issue of *American Girl* finished if we did!

1. What do you call a parrot with a long tail?

A bee flying backward. 11 **What is worse than a centipede with sore feet?** ***A giraffe with a sore throat.***

Pets: Pals or P

"What's it really like to be responsib

This issue, Talk It Out went to San Francisco, California, to talk to these ten-year-old girls.

Teresa: My dad made me take care of my dog. Once, I wanted to go roller-skating instead of taking the dog out. So my dad told me to put on my roller skates and take the dog with me!

Donna: When we got our cat, my brother started to play with it. I wanted to play with the cat, too, and we stood there arguing. My mom said, "Well, who's going to take care of it?" I said I would. Then my brother said he would, too. But he was going to let me do all the work, like clean the litter box. I was supposed to clean up after the cat, and he was supposed to play with it!

Fiona: At my house, we argued about who was going to sleep with our kitten. It wound up sleeping with my mom.

Jennifer: I used to think I could do anything I wanted with my rat. So I put him in a backpack and took him to Marine World. Well, he got loose at the whale show. I finally found him, but when I put him in the backpack again, I dropped it. He just lay there. So I took him to the office and said, "My rat's dying right here." They had to call medical help. He died two days later.

Marisa: My mom gave us a pair of guinea pigs, and the male got sick. Because he was my pet, I thought I could take care of him myself. I gave him cough medicine. But then he got sicker, and as soon as I got him in my hand, he died.

You may be tempted to make your own decisions about where to take your pet and what to do when there's a problem. But it's safer to check out your plans with your mom or dad.

Wendy: My hamster used to open the door of her cage. One night, my mom found her in the bathroom. Another night, I found her behind my pillow. So I had to lock and tie the cage.

Photos: CATHY GOULD RATH

12 **What do cats cook when they're in a hurry?** ***Minute mice.*** 13 **What do you call a chocolate**

Wendy Crystal

ests?

le for a pet?"

Crystal: When people bothered my cat too much, he'd scratch them. So my parents said, "Tell people to stop bothering him, and he won't scratch anymore."

Teresa: Once, I was away from my puppy the whole summer because I went to camp. When I came back, the puppy didn't recognize me, and barked at me every time I moved. I told my mother, "I think I'm being attacked," but she said the puppy was only being friendly. So I tried to pat the puppy, but she growled at me.

When a pet's behavior causes a problem, you have to help fix it. The solution may be as simple as locking a cage. For bigger problems, like barking or biting, ask your veterinarian for help.

Marisa: The most important thing about having a pet is to love and take care of it.

Crystal: I think the most important thing is friendship.

Tips for Being a Better Pet Pal

1 **If you're sharing a pet with brothers and sisters, and there are a lot of fights over it:**
Divide both the work and the fun. Make a schedule and stick to it. Take turns playing with your pet and doing the things no one wants to do.

2 **If you want to get a second pet:**
Ask yourself: Do you really want another pet, or are you just bored with your first one? Try to think of something different you and your animal can do together. Get your pet a new toy to play with, or teach it a cool trick.

3 **If your pet gets lost or dies:**
It's natural to be very sad. Talking it over with friends and family can help. Sad feelings do get better over time, though that's hard to believe when you're crying your eyes out. Sometimes it helps to get another pet. You might want to get one right away, or you might want to wait. You'll know when you're ready.

4 **If you just don't feel like taking care of your pet:**
Remember that your pet is a living creature that depends on you. Try to find a way to make the chores fun. Listen to your favorite tape while you clean the fish tank. Or give yourself and your dog a treat after its bath. Nobody likes the boring tasks that come with owning a pet. But if you think of why you wanted a pet in the first place, and remember how much fun you have together, the work won't seem so bad!

What problem would you like to read about in Talk It Out? Write and tell us.

lamb? *A candy baa.* 14 What is gray and has four legs and a trunk? *A mouse going on vacation.*

15 **What vegetable does Lassie like best?** ***Collie-flower.*** 16 **What's better than a dog that can count?**

ster Lincoln, Peace, and Tennessee

By Jane Cutler

Nothing lives forever—not even Rachel's hamster, Tennessee.

Tennessee lived longer than any hamster Rachel had ever known or even heard about. She lived for so long, Rachel stopped worrying about her, and Jonathan and Lesley, Rachel's brother and sister, bragged about her to their friends. Even Mrs. T., the housekeeper, who was not a small-animal lover, took an interest in Tennessee. "Not one of your run-of-the-mill rodents, which expire all over the place," Mrs. T. would say, sounding just a little proud.

Mrs. T. said *expire* when she meant *die* because she never under any circumstances used the words *die* or *death* or *dead*, even if that was clearly what she meant.

"Mrs. T. is old-fashioned about death," Rachel's mother explained.

The day Tennessee finally did expire was a Saturday, the Saturday Rachel's soccer team, the Garfields, was having its rematch with the Earthquakes. Only Rachel, Jonathan, and Mrs. T. were home. Rachel's parents were away at their high-school reunion. Lesley had gone to the mountains with a wilderness group to do a trail cleanup. And Uncle Benson, Rachel's favorite person, was at juggling camp.

That morning before the game, Rachel played with Tennessee. She watched while the hamster patiently cleaned herself with her front paws. She watched while Tennessee explored the old couch, snuffling into every corner and poking her nose around all the cushions. Rachel turned on the TV to watch cartoons. She put Tennessee into the front pocket of her shirt, and the hamster stood there with her head sticking out and her pointy, intelligent-seeming face turning

Illustrated by Doron Ben-Ami

from side to side, as if she were following the program too. Then Rachel sat very still and let Tennessee curl up in her hand and take a nap.

There might be another hamster somewhere in the world, Rachel thought, *who trusted a human being enough to go to sleep in her hand.* But she had never heard of one.

When it was time to leave for the game, Rachel put Tennessee back in her cage. In through the wire, she stuffed one end of a long strip of toilet paper. While Rachel was busy fending off the Earthquakes, Tennessee would keep busy pulling the toilet paper the rest of the way into the cage (she did that with her front paws), shredding it (she'd use her teeth), and using the shredded-up pieces to add a clean new layer to her nest. Rachel would come home, sweaty and tired and probably frustrated and embarrassed, to find the hamster peacefully dozing in the corner of her cage, which smelled pleasantly of cedar chips.

"Bye, Tennessee," Rachel said, putting on her shin guards and double-knotting the long shoelaces on her soccer cleats.

"Bye, Jonathan, bye, Mrs. T.," she called, leaving reluctantly for the soccer field and the possibility of repeating one of the worst experiences of her life, that awful morning the Earthquakes trounced the Garfields 12–0.

This time, the Earthquakes won again, 7–2. *It could have been worse,* Rachel reminded herself as she walked home. When she got to her house, she was surprised to see Jonathan and Mrs. T. waiting for her out front on the porch. *Since when did either of them care so much about a soccer game?* she wondered, looking at their worried faces.

But as soon as she was close enough to hear, Jonathan said, "Rachel, Tennessee is dead," and she knew their worried faces didn't have anything to do with soccer.

Dead!

Rachel stopped in her tracks and put her

 18 **How do bunnies keep their fur in place?** ***They use hare spray.*** 19 **Which animal can jump higher**

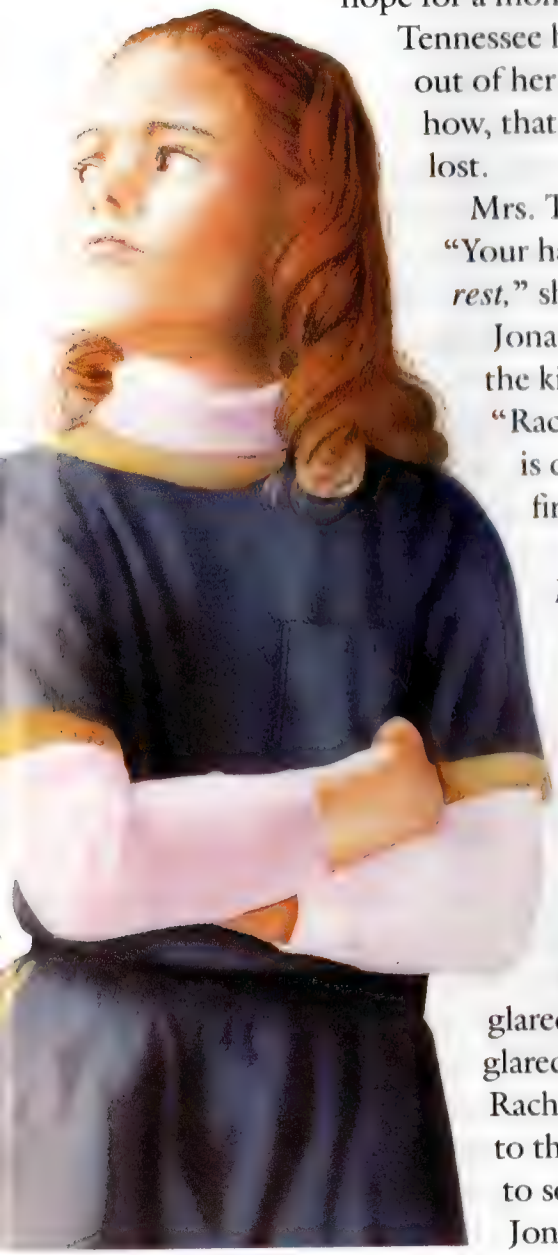
hands on her hips. "You big liar!" she said in her meanest voice, as if she could bully her brother into taking back what he had told her.

"Go on inside, Jonathan," Mrs. T. said. Then, wearing her no-nonsense face, she led Rachel into the house and sat her down at the table in the kitchen.

Rachel frowned and crossed her arms.

Mrs. T. gazed out the window at the red brush-shaped blossoms of the bottlebrush tree. "Well," Mrs. T. finally said, "the hamster is gone."

"Gone?" Rachel said, letting herself hope for a moment that Tennessee had only gotten out of her cage somehow, that she was only lost.



Mrs. T. tried again. "Your hamster is *at rest,*" she said.

Jonathan stood in the kitchen doorway. "Rachel, Tennessee is dead," he said firmly.

Rachel knew Mrs. T. wouldn't use the word *dead.* She knew Jonathan must be telling her the truth. She stood up and glared at him. He glared back. Then Rachel walked down to the family room, to see for herself. Jonathan followed.

What Rachel expected to find was the hamster curled up in her nest in the corner of her cage, maybe dead, but looking the way she looked when she was sleeping. To Rachel's surprise, the cage was empty. "Where is she?" she demanded in a high voice that made Jonathan look alarmed.

"You big liar!" Rachel said in her meanest voice.

"Mrs. T. put her in the laundry room, in a box," he said. "Come on, I'll show you."

A small cardboard box left over from someone's birthday sat on top of the clothes dryer. Jonathan picked up the box and took off the lid, holding it so Rachel could see inside. When she looked, she saw a plastic bag cinched at the top with a yellow tie. Inside the plastic bag was Tennessee, stretched out instead of curled up and clearly not just sleeping. Rachel turned away, and Jonathan closed up the box and put it back on top of the dryer.

"Why is she in that bag?" Rachel asked, though that was only one of the things she wanted to know.

"Mrs. T. put her in. She says the plastic will protect her after she's buried. From the rain. And from"—Jonathan hesitated—"well, from worms."

Rachel understood that this was true. The box would fall apart, but not the plastic bag. "Plastic lasts forever," her sister Lesley had once declared when she got home from a Help Save Our Planet meeting. "There's no way to get rid of the stuff."

"We'll have to bury Tennessee," Jonathan prodded. "I mean, you can't just flush her down

the toilet like the goldfish."

"Flushing the goldfish down the toilet wasn't my idea," Rachel reminded him.

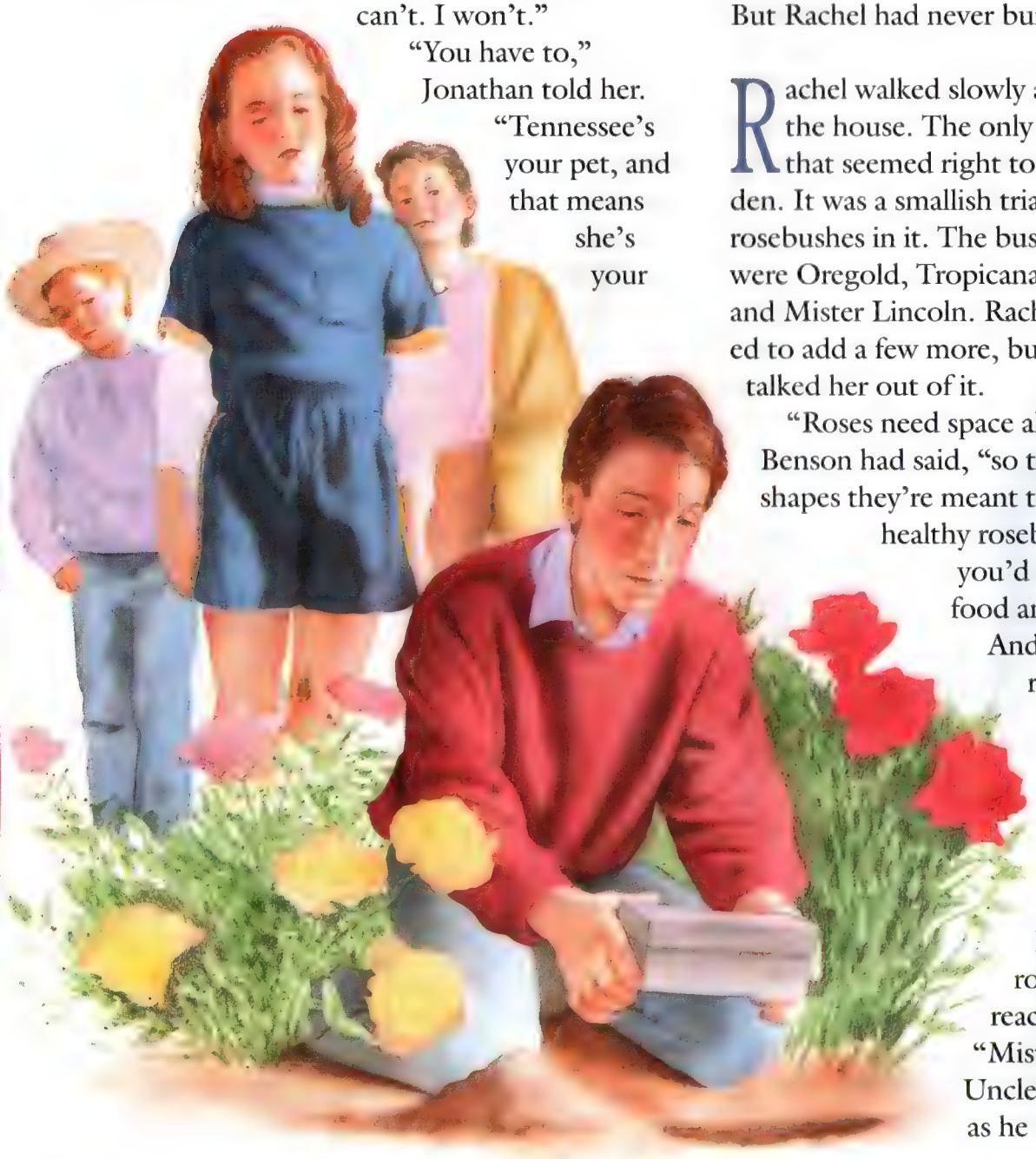
"That's not the point. That's not what I'm talking about," Jonathan said.

"Well, what *are* you talking about?" said Rachel angrily.

"What I'm talking about is, she's your pet, Rachel, and you're the one who has to decide where to bury her." He was beginning to sound angry, too.

"I don't want to decide," Rachel said. "I can't. I won't."

"You have to," Jonathan told her. "Tennessee's your pet, and that means she's your responsibility. Just make up your mind where, and then we'll bury her and get it over with. Come on."



Some kids, Rachel knew, had dead pets buried all around their yards. The Connolly kids liked burials so much they even buried strange animals in their backyard—dead birds and mangled tortoises they found in the road—right alongside their own dead pets. The Connolly kids had one funeral after another, it seemed. And they had so many little markers all around their yard, it was hard to play there without tripping over one. But Rachel had never buried a pet before.

Rachel walked slowly around the outside of the house. The only place she could find that seemed right to her was the rose garden. It was a smallish triangle with only five rosebushes in it. The bushes all had names. They were Oregold, Tropicana, Mount Shasta, Peace, and Mister Lincoln. Rachel's mother had wanted to add a few more, but Uncle Benson had talked her out of it.

"Roses need space all around them," Uncle Benson had said, "so they can grow into the shapes they're meant to have. If you want a healthy rosebush, treat it the way you'd treat a child. Give it food and water. Protect it. And make sure it's got room to grow in its own way."

Rachel stood looking at the roses. Mister Lincoln was the one she liked the best. Mister Lincoln was a dark red rose with branches that reached toward the sky. "Mister Lincoln is upright," Uncle Benson had joked as he loosened the soil

 don't have scarves that are long enough. **21** **What do you call a cow that eats grass?** ***A lawn moo-er.***

around Mister Lincoln's roots.

Peace was her next favorite. Peace was a yellow rose with pink-edged petals and strong, spreading branches. "Peace wants to spread out all over the place," Uncle Benson had said as he watered Peace.

"I've decided where to bury Tennessee," Rachel told Jonathan and Mrs. T. when she went inside. "In the rose garden, in between Mister Lincoln and Peace."

The burial didn't take long. Mrs. T. and Rachel stood in the driveway next to the rose garden and Rachel held the cardboard box, which felt as if there were nothing at all inside it. Brian Bishop, the six-year-old from across the street, came over to see what was happening and decided to stay.

Jonathan dug a hole in the loose soil. Then he took the box from Rachel, put it in the hole, and covered it up again. When the first shovelful of dirt clattered on the cardboard, Brian sucked in his breath and squeezed Rachel's hand so tightly it made tears come into her eyes.

After the hole was filled, Mrs. T. solemnly put down a smooth stone to mark the place. And that was all.

Later, Jonathan remembered to ask Rachel about her soccer game. "The Earthquakes killed us," Rachel told him.

Rachel went to bed earlier than usual. Since it was Saturday night, she could hear party music coming from a couple of different places. She could hear a siren in the distance. The thing she couldn't hear was Tennessee's exercise wheel squeaking as it went around. Not hearing Tennessee running in her wheel in the family room kept Rachel awake for a long time.

Finally she slept, but before the night was over, she woke up again, feeling small and sad.

She thought about calling Mrs. T. or Jonathan. Mrs. T. would come in fussing with her bathrobe belt, looking stern. Jonathan would come in in his striped pajamas with his hair standing up, looking tired. Rachel decided it wouldn't help her a bit to have either one of them around.

So she sat up and hugged her knees for comfort, and cried.

"I've decided where to bury Tennessee," Rachel told them.

When she was finished, she wiped her face with her nightshirt and kneeled up on her bed to look out the window into the backyard, where the familiar plants and trees and bushes all looked blue and black and silver, unfamiliar, in the moonlight. Without meaning to, Rachel pictured Tennessee, stretched out stiffly inside the plastic bag. She shook her head to erase the picture. She shook her head again, but the picture remained. Suddenly Rachel felt she couldn't bear it. For Tennessee to be dead was one thing. For her to be packed away like that was something else.

Quickly, Rachel got out of bed. She put on her sneakers and a sweater, tiptoed down the dark hall through the shadowy kitchen to the side door, and slipped out into the night.

Rachel had to go under the stucco archway, shining weirdly white in the moonlight, through the warped side gate that creaked when she opened it, under the bottlebrush tree, and out toward the street to get to the rose garden. *What if someone sees me?* she worried.

But no one was there to see her. There was not even a cat prowling along by itself. The birds were still asleep, and all the dogs in the neighborhood were inside, dreaming their doggy dreams. Rachel was the only one out, and she slipped like a shadow among the

shadows of the moonlit world.

"When something dies," Lesley had told Rachel, "it goes back to the earth and decays. It turns into stuff that nourishes the things that are still alive. At least, that's the way it's supposed to be."

If Tennessee were just buried in the earth, Rachel thought, *she'd be able to decay and turn into something else. She might even turn into something that would nourish roses.*

Because of the stone, Rachel had no trouble finding the exact place they'd buried Tennessee. She kneeled between Mister Lincoln and Peace and dug down into the cool earth with her hands until she touched the box. Then she lifted it out, brushed the loose dirt off the top of it, and waited. She wanted and did not want to open up that box, and she sat there for a few minutes just holding it in her lap.

Finally, she took off the lid and set it down beside her on the ground. Then she opened up the plastic bag.

When Rachel slid the hamster out into her hand, she hoped it would feel the way it had when Tennessee was alive and napping there. It didn't feel at all the same.

Rachel stayed still for a while, holding Tennessee and feeling sorry she had died. She knew she'd miss Tennessee. She knew she'd never forget her. And she knew it was time to bury her, once and for all.

This time, Rachel put Tennessee into the ground without the box and without the plastic bag. Gently she pushed back the earth and smoothed it out. She made it so smooth that even she couldn't tell exactly where Tennessee was buried. Then she brushed off her hands and put the bag and the tie and the box and the marking stone into the trash can.

By the time Rachel went inside, the jays were up and squabbling. She slid into bed and closed her eyes and imagined the rose garden coming to life in the morning light. She could see Mister Lincoln reaching up. She could see Peace spreading out. And she could see the smooth, dark earth stretching between them and protecting everything underneath it.★

Now

Meet the Author

Jane Cutler

When I was growing up, I had no sisters or brothers, no pets, and no garden. Sometimes I wished I did. But I had friends and books and sports and a lively imagination—which turned out to be exactly what I needed!

At 8

1930

Looking Back

A Girl's Best Friend

Squirmy pets. Furry pets. Piglets, cockatoos, and Saint Bernards. Pets to play with, to talk to, to cuddle—girls love them all! Here's a peek into the past with American girls and some of their best friends.

Credits on page 2.

1836

How many dogs and other pets do you see in this picture? Look closely at the painting hanging over the fireplace. What do you see there?

The Family at Home, by H. Knight

2. What can you do with Job's tears?

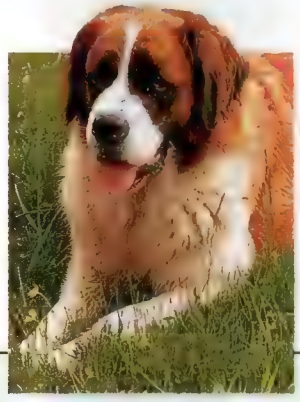
Dogs

In Felicity's time, many families kept small dogs called *lapdogs*. Lapdogs were cute—and they sometimes came in handy. Colonial houses had only fireplaces to heat them, so they got pretty cold in the winter. Girls spent hours sitting in chilly parlors, practicing their needlework or their handwriting. A lapdog lived up to its name by cuddling in a girl's lap and keeping her warm—like a living blanket! Turn to page 49 to see a famous painting of a colonial girl with a lapdog.

1910

This dog's meals were all home made. Canned dog food wasn't available for another 20 years.

Pekingese were once the royal dogs of China. Four Pekingese went everywhere with the emperor, and the punishment for trying to hurt or steal one of them was death. Chinese people referred to Pekingese as *sleeve dogs,* because the dogs were so small they could be carried in the sleeve of a kimono.



Saint Bernards come from the Swiss Alps, one of the world's highest mountain ranges. For hundreds of years these big dogs have helped rescue people who got lost or hurt in the deep snowdrifts of the Alps. The most famous Saint Bernard of all was named Barry. He rescued 40 people in his lifetime.

Dalmations come from ancient Egypt. A hundred years ago, fire companies in America began keeping Dalmations. The dogs raced through city streets alongside the horse-drawn fire trucks. Dalmations don't chase fire trucks anymore, but they're still kept as pets in many firehouses.

legs? ***A cat-erpillar.*** 27 **What do you call someone who is afraid of pets?** ***Pet-rified.*** 28 **What's black**

Cats

Pioneer families like Kirsten's kept cats as *mousers*. Farmers on the frontier stored wheat and hay in their barns. Mousers lived in the barn to keep mice and rats from eating up the grain. Without cats to protect the wheat and hay, a farmer would have had a hard time feeding his family and his animals through a long, cold winter.

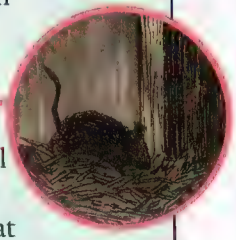
Girl and Pets, by Eastman Johnson

1856

If this girl doesn't keep a sharp eye out, one of her pets might cause trouble for the others! Which pet should she watch?

Cat Eyes

Cat eyes have more *photo receptors*, which allow them to see better than people's eyes in dim places.



Here's what a girl might see in a barn at night.

Here's what her cat might see.

1958

Cats like people, and people like cats! There are 57 million pet cats in America today, which makes cats the number-one pet in America.

Illustrations: HEIDI PETACH

and white and black and white and black and white and black and white? *A penguin rolling down a*

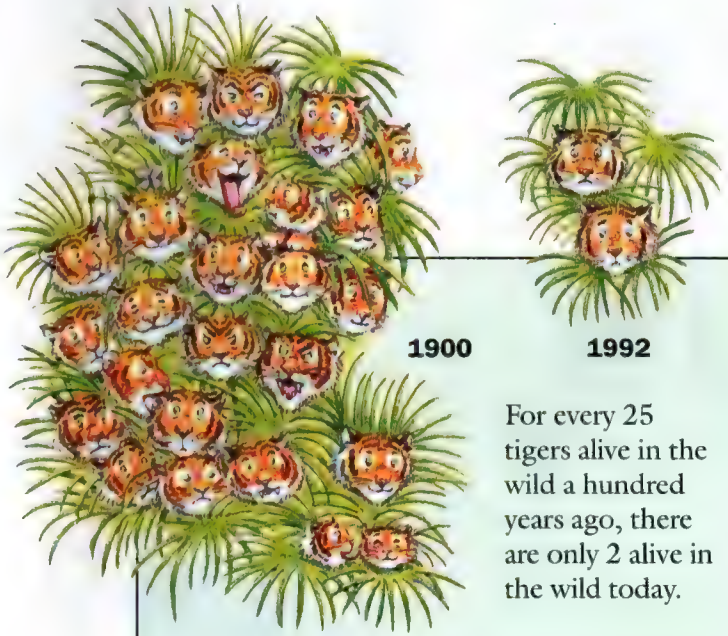
1906
This girl may think it's fun to have a wild baby leopard as a pet. But what will happen when the baby grows up?

Wild Animals

In Samantha's time, people in America loved to put together collections of unusual and exotic things. Some wealthy people even collected animals, making pets out of monkeys, parrots, snakes, leopards, and other wild animals from faraway places. Nowadays, most people believe wild animals should be protected, not collected. Girls all over the country work to help save certain kinds of animals from disappearing forever.

1910
The first public American zoo opened in New York City in 1861. Fifty years later, when this picture was taken, there were lots of zoos. These zoos bought thousands of wild animals that had been captured all over the world. Many of those animals are now extinct, partly because people hunted them so much. Today, many zoos breed rare animals to help save them from becoming extinct.

1901
Is this girl calm or crazy to wear all these snakes? How many snakes can you count?



1900 **1992**

For every 25 tigers alive in the wild a hundred years ago, there are only 2 alive in the wild today.

 hill. 29 **Why won't snails let goldfish play with their toys?** ***Because snails are shellfish.*** 30 **Ten**

Rodents

In Molly's day, girls had cats and dogs, just as they do now. They also had brand-new kinds of pets like guinea pigs, hamsters, and gerbils. These rodents came to America for the first time in the 1940s and 1950s, to be used in laboratory experiments. Hamsters, guinea pigs, and gerbils quickly became popular pets. They were small, playful, and inexpensive, and a girl could feed and take care of them herself. And she didn't have to worry about taking her pets for a walk—unless she had hamsters like Twinkle and Winkle!★

1967
Twinkle and Winkle go for their daily walk.

Guinea pig

Hamster

Gerbil

Which Is Which?

These three rodents have a lot in common—but not everything. Guess which rodent goes with each of these facts. Write its name on one of the lines below.

1. This rodent's teeth never stop growing. It has to chew on hard things every day to keep its teeth short enough to fit in its mouth. _____

2. Like most desert animals, this rodent needs very little water. _____

3. This rodent loves to stuff food into its cheeks, to store and eat later. In fact, its name means "to hoard," or to save, in German. _____

Answers: 1.Guinea pig; 2.Gerbil; 3.Hamster.

1965
This hamster's parents, Boris and Natasha, lived in the White House, along with President Lyndon Johnson

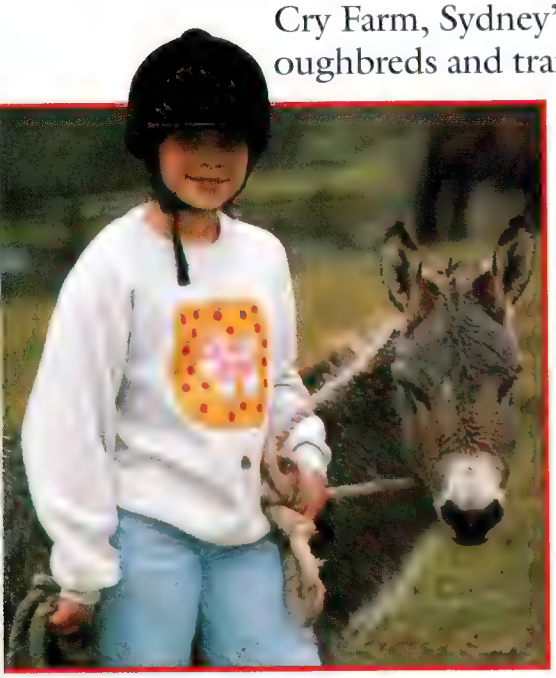
Photos: Sutter Photography

cats were in a boat. One jumped out. How many were left? ***None. The other nine were copycats.***

A Horse of Her Very Own

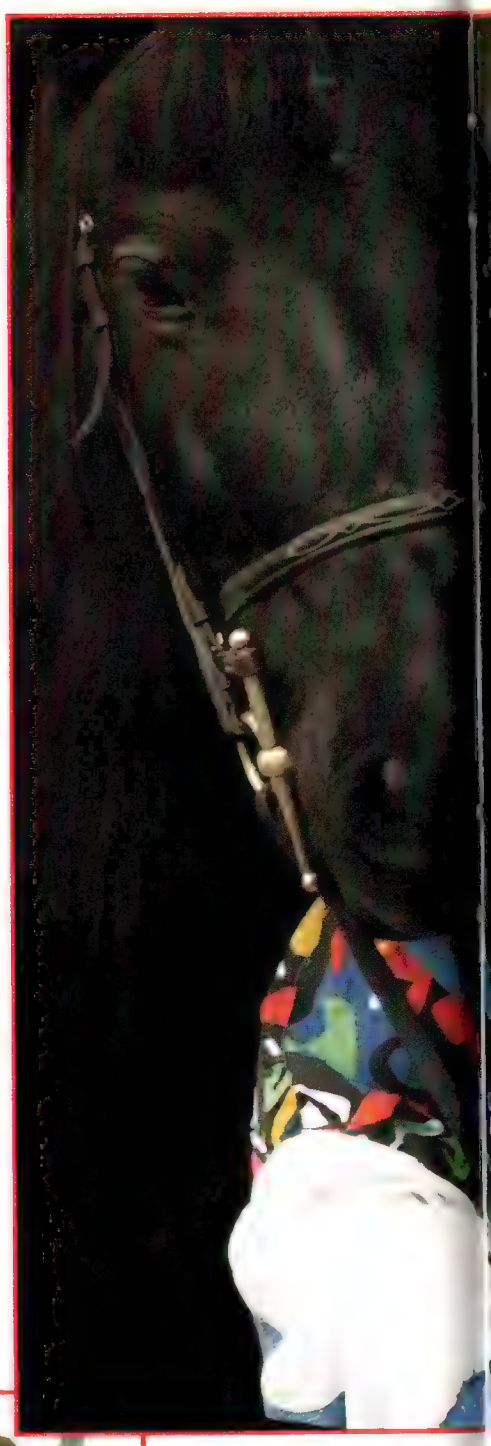
Almost every girl has wished for one. What would it really be like if that wish came true?

To find out, *American Girl* went to visit Sydney Hughes, a nine-year-old who lives on a horse farm (lucky her!) and has two ponies and a donkey of her own. (Lucky, lucky her!) At Far Cry Farm, Sydney's family raises thoroughbreds and trains them to be racehorses, so Sydney lives right in the middle of an American girl's dream.



Sydney's pet donkey lived in the house when it was little—until it started knocking over the furniture. Now it lives in the barn with Count and Smokey Bear.

Sydney is completely responsible for her two ponies, Smokey Bear and Count. She's up at six o'clock every morning and off to the stalls to feed them before she goes to school. They eat hay, or dried grass, which Sydney carries to



Sydney Hughes with Smokey Bear and Count

Sydney pumps water for her ponies. A horse drinks up to 12 gallons of water a day—that's like drinking 128 cans of soda!

31 **How do you fix a canary that sings off-key?** ***You take it in for a tune-up.*** 32 **Will a puppy go with**

Measuring Up

Horses are measured in *hands* to the tops of their shoulders. A hand is about four inches.

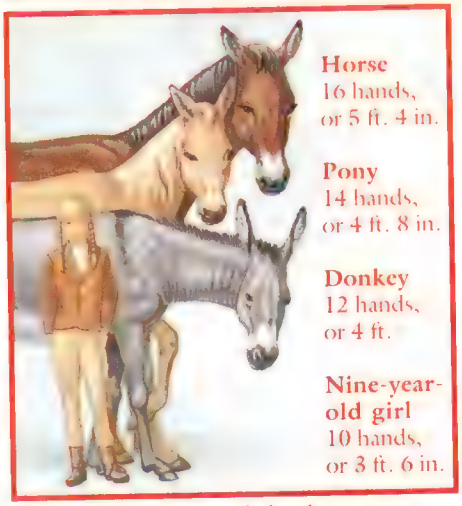


Illustration: WALTER STUART

Horses, ponies, and donkeys are different animals in the same family. One easy way to tell them apart is by their size.

Photos: RICHARD NUGENT

the stalls in small bales. She also gives Smokey Bear a handful of grain—a mixture of oats, molasses, and bran—to help balance out his diet. Ponies drink a lot of water, and Sydney carries buckets and buckets of it to the stalls. Then she leads her ponies to a pasture about five minutes away, where they eat the lush grass. She leaves them in the pasture for only eight hours to be sure they don't eat too much. She knows that horses can get sick if they have too much to eat.

Morning chores like mucking take Sydney about half an hour.

Sydney also *mucks,* or cleans, the bedding in her ponies' stalls. That means removing the soiled straw, which is full of manure, and replacing it with fresh straw. Straw and hay may look similar to you, but Count and Smokey Bear know the difference. Straw doesn't taste good, so they won't eat it!

After her morning chores,

3. What's an attribute?

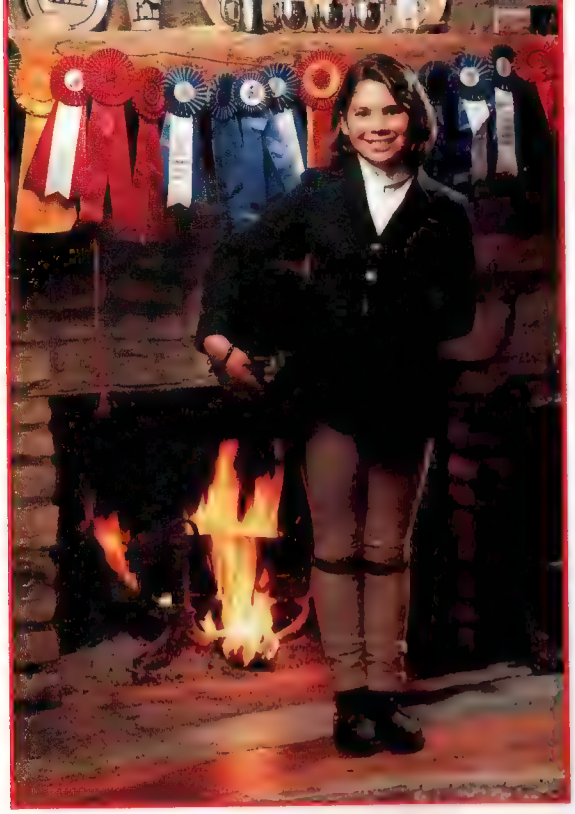
you to the movies? ***Only if you buy it pup-corn.*** 33 **What do fish do for fun?** ***Fish-bowl.*** 34 **What**

Sydney heads off to school, a half-hour ride through the fence-lined rolling hills of Kentucky horse country. When she gets home in the afternoon, Smokey Bear and Count are waiting for her. It's time to have fun exercising them. When the weather's nice, Sydney and her mother take the ponies for long rides on their favorite trails.

On Saturdays, Sydney loads Smokey Bear into the horse trailer. Her mother drives them to a nearby farm

Sydney shows good jumping form as she rides Smokey Bear over a fence. She leans forward over his neck, but keeps her head up so she can see what's ahead.

 kind of a dog works in a hospital? *A dog-tor.* 35 What is invisible and smells like carrots? *Rabbit burps.*



Sydney's awards have a place of honor at Far Cry Farm.

for Sydney's weekly riding lesson. Sydney has been tak ing private lessons for three years. Now she's learning how to jump.

In the summer, Sydney competes in horse shows against other girls her age. She rides and jumps very well and has already won many ribbons and trophies.

Sydney also belongs to Pony Club, where she and other kids her age learn how to take care of their ponies and equipment. To keep Smokey Bear and Count clean, Sydney has to groom their coats often. She *curries* them with a currycomb to loosen dirt, dead hair, and tangles. She uses a brush to make their coats lie flat, and a plastic comb to make their

A Blue-Ribbon Outfit

Sydney wears a *riding habit* when she competes in horse shows.

hunt cap:
A smart rider always wears a hard plastic helmet covered in velvet. Most helmets also have chin straps. They're called hunt caps because they were originally worn by riders in fox hunts.

ratcatcher shirt:
In England, people who hunted rats on foot wore less formal clothes than people who hunted foxes on horses. The word *ratcatcher* came to stand for casual hunting clothes. But today, a ratcatcher shirt is formal enough to wear in a horse show.

jacket:
Horse-show judges like riders to look neat and well dressed. Riders wear a close-fitting jacket made from stretchy material that allows them to move easily.

jodhpurs:
Originally, jodhpurs were baggy around the hips, like the ones shown on the right, so riders could sit comfortably on the horse. Now most jodhpurs are tight but stretchy, like Sydney's.

boots:
A rider wears boots—rather than shoes—with a small heel so her feet don't slide through the stirrups.

Illustration: SUSAN MAHAL

Count gets loving care from Sydney.

manes and tails smooth and silky. Every day, she uses a hoof-pick to clean out any mud and manure that might be stuck in their hooves.

A *farrier,* or blacksmith, comes regularly to Far Cry Farm to put metal shoes on the thoroughbred horses and Sydney's ponies. He trims their hooves, then nails the shoes on them. Horses' and ponies' hooves are like the white part of your fingernails, only thicker, so Smokey Bear and Count don't feel the nails that keep their shoes in place.

Grooming Supplies

Sydney uses these tools to keep her ponies looking their best.

Every time she rides, Sydney has to clean her *tack,* or riding equipment. She rubs *saddle soap* into the leather bridle and saddle. Saddle soap is a thick paste, like wax, that removes dirt and keeps leather soft and shiny. The metal bit that goes in the pony's mouth needs to be cleaned, too. When Sydney's in a hurry, she puts the bit in the dishwasher!

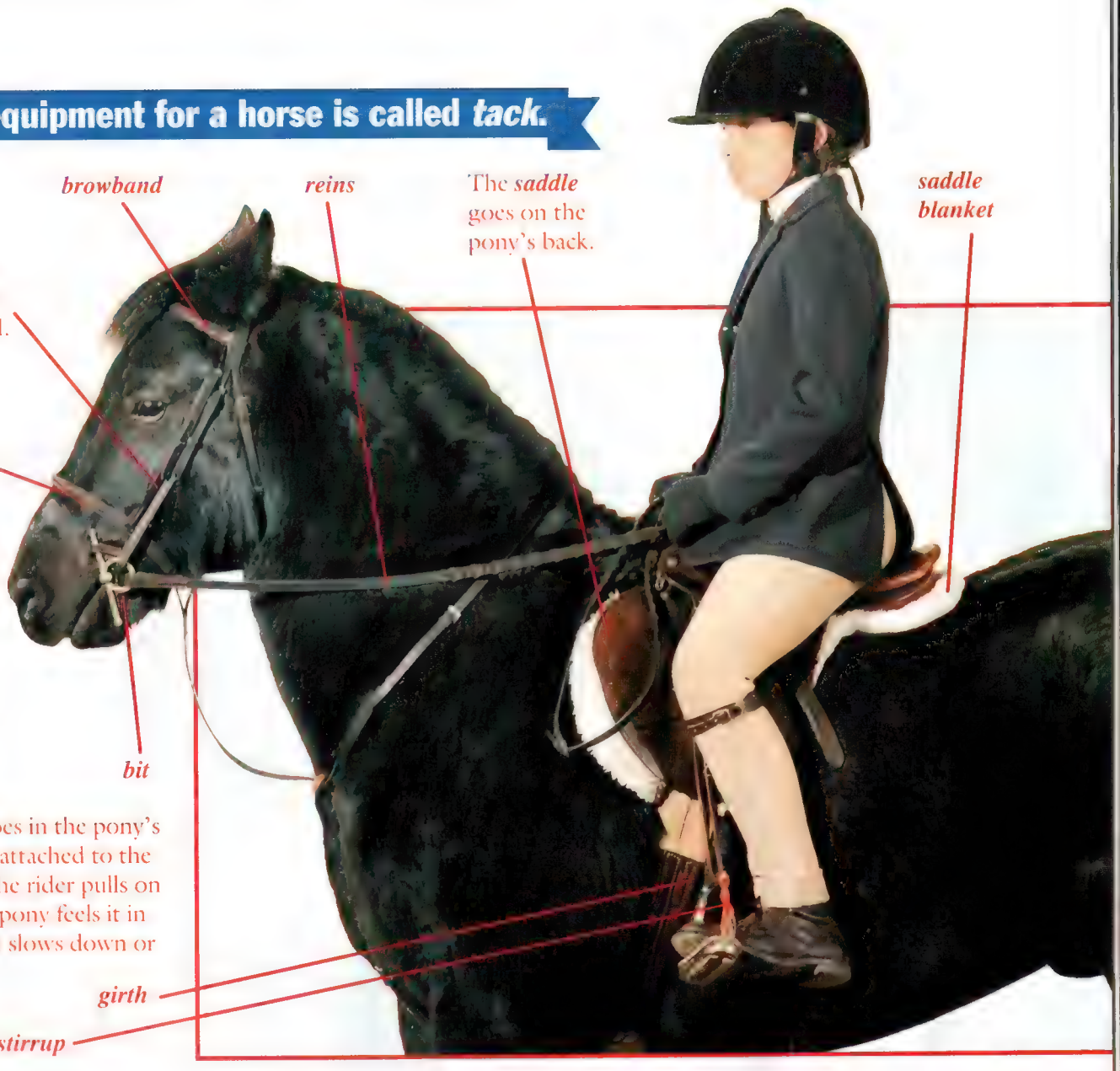
As Sydney gets bigger she will outgrow her beloved ponies, but she has a horse named Billy Ray waiting for her. Billy Ray was supposed to be a racehorse, but it turned out that he was too quiet to race.

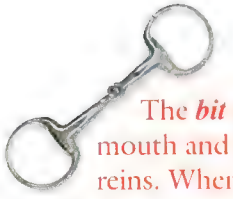
Sydney can't ride Billy Ray until a trainer has finished *breaking* him. Breaking a horse means getting it used to having a bit in its mouth, a bridle on its head, and a saddle and rider on its back. Since most horses don't like to be broken, they often kick and bite. Trainers need to be strong enough to control a bucking horse. Sydney's grandmother used to break horses, but now she does less dangerous work.

One of the fun parts of living on a thoroughbred farm is naming the racehorses. Sydney got to name one of the thoroughbreds raised at Far Cry Farm. After

 on your kitchen floor? *Rep-tiles.* 38 What kind of horse do you want to avoid when you sleep?

Riding equipment for a horse is called *tack*.





The ***bit*** goes in the pony's mouth and is attached to the reins. When the rider pulls on the reins, the pony feels it in its mouth and slows down or stops.

trying out a lot of names, she finally settled on The Lemonade Kid.

There may be many different horses in Sydney's future, but none will ever mean more to her than her ponies Smokey Bear and Count. They're a lot of work, but the love they return to Sydney and the good times she shares with them make it all worthwhile. Sydney knows she's a lucky, lucky, lucky girl!★

Sydney and her grandmother admire a thoroughbred named The Lemonade Kid. Thoroughbreds have slim bodies and long, strong legs.

Naming a Horse

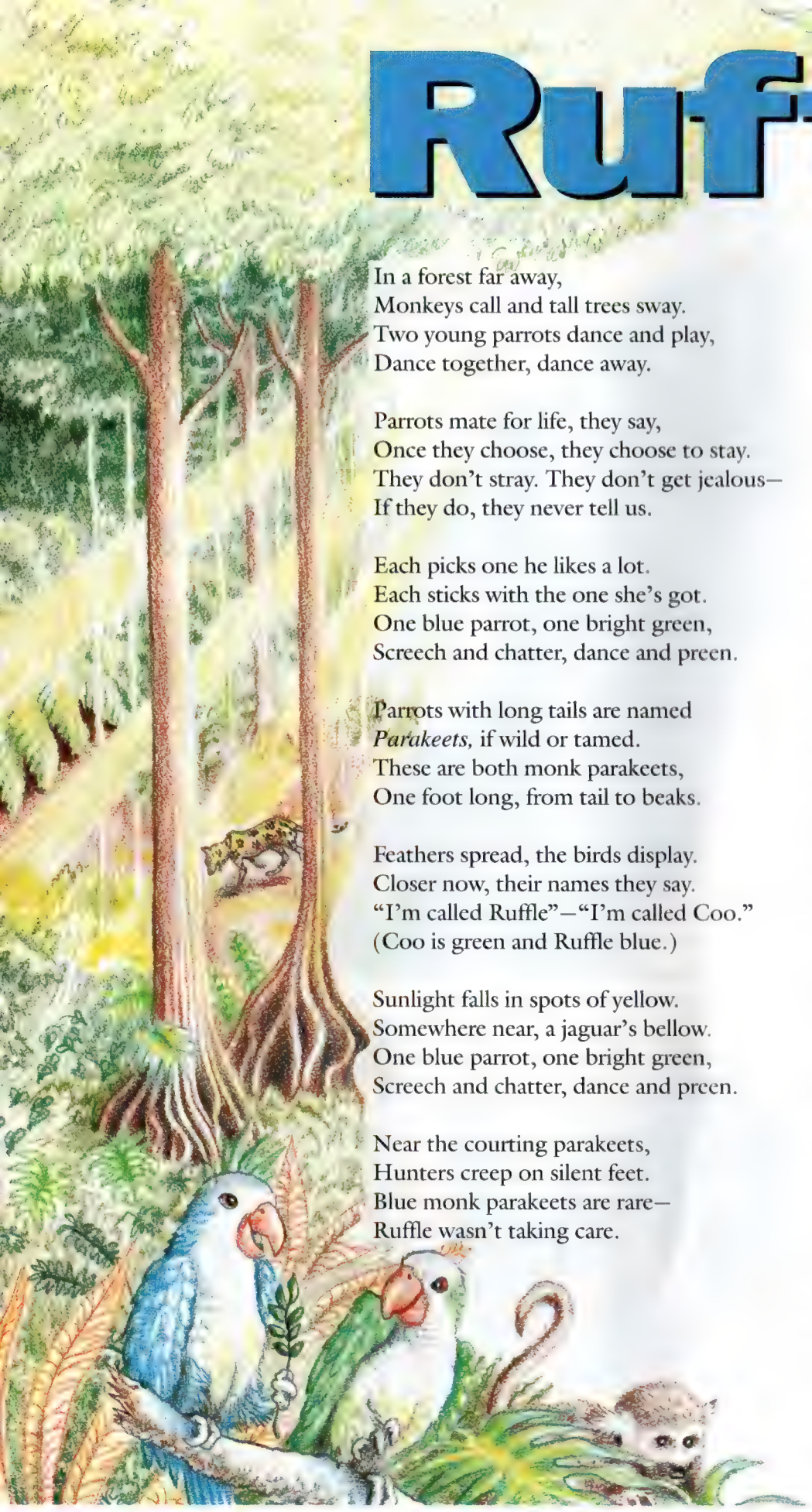
A thoroughbred racehorse's name must be approved by an organization called the Jockey Club. Here are three of the rules that have to be followed.

1. The name can't be more than 18 letters.
2. The name can't be the same as any song, movie, or book title.
3. The name can't be the same as that of any other American racehorse currently racing or breeding.

The third rule is the hardest, because there are hundreds of thousands of names registered!

A night-mare. 39 **What do you call an owl with a sore throat?** ***A bird that doesn't give a hoot.***

Ruffle



In a forest far away,
Monkeys call and tall trees sway.
Two young parrots dance and play,
Dance together, dance away.

Parrots mate for life, they say,
Once they choose, they choose to stay.
They don't stray. They don't get jealous—
If they do, they never tell us.

Each picks one he likes a lot.
Each sticks with the one she's got.
One blue parrot, one bright green,
Screech and chatter, dance and preen.

Parrots with long tails are named
Parakeets, if wild or tamed.
These are both monk parakeets,
One foot long, from tail to beaks.

Feathers spread, the birds display.
Closer now, their names they say.
"I'm called Ruffle"—"I'm called Coo."
(Coo is green and Ruffle blue.)

Sunlight falls in spots of yellow.
Somewhere near, a jaguar's bellow.
One blue parrot, one bright green,
Screech and chatter, dance and preen.

Near the courting parakeets,
Hunters creep on silent feet.
Blue monk parakeets are rare—
Ruffle wasn't taking care.

Through the jungle, hunters glide.
Just behind the birds they slide—
Then the net comes crashing down.
Ruffle's trapped, without a sound.

Coo flaps frantically about.
"Go," screams Ruffle. "Fly. Get out."
Coo won't leave his mate. He flies,
Diving, for the hunters' eyes.

Then the hunters swing at Coo.
Soon enough, they've trapped him too.
Wings are clipped and feet are tied.
Ruff and Coo are terrified.

From the forest, green and gracious,
From the forest, lush and spacious,
Come the parrots, stuffed in crates,
Bound for pet stores in the States.

To New York the crates are flown.
Coo and Ruffle screech and moan.
Coo and Ruffle, and some others,
Taken from their friends and mothers.

In New York, a burly man
Loads the crates into a van.
Ruffle squawks—the van is airless.
And the burly man gets careless,

And a crate falls, with a crash.
Fifty birds fly in a flash.
Green and blue and yellow feathers,
Winging through New England weathers.

Sudden freedom is a shock—
But the parrots form a flock.
On they fly, without a rest,
Looking for a place to nest.

Written and Illustra

40 **What has four legs and a tail, eats hay, and sees just as well from either end?** ***A horse with its***

nd Coo

On they fly, and reach a city,
Kind of grimy, kind of gritty.
Smokestacks turn the air to brown,
Garbage lies upon the ground.

Near the harbor, there's a tree.
It's been there a century,
Tall and leaning in the breeze
That is blowing off the seas.

To that tree the parrots fly,
Standing graceful, proud, and high.
One by one, the birds alight.
Somehow, this tree feels just right.

Ruffle carries sticks and things,
Coo weaves in what Ruffle brings.
Several others come help too—
They will nest with Ruff and Coo.

Coo and Ruffle, working fast,
Want a nest that's going to last.
Something tells them, build it thick.
Build it strong, and build it quick.

Two days later, drenching rain
Brings a howling hurricane.
Wind and sleet pound parrot nests,
But their work withstands the tests.

Coo and Ruffle, safe within,
Listen to the crashing din,
Think they'll add a twig or two
When the hurricane is through.

Winter comes, and snow drifts high.
In the branches, cold winds sigh.
In their nests, the parrots huddle.
Coo and Ruffle dream and cuddle.

Icy winds make branches quiver.
In their nests, the parrots shiver.
Seeds and buds are hard to find.
Winter here is quite unkind.

Then the coldest months are past.
Most birds make it—most birds last.
Coo and Ruffle, young and strong,
Do just fine, all winter long.

If you drive along the shore
Up toward Bridgeport, just before,
You'll see all I've said is true:
You'll see Ruffle, you'll see Coo.

Parrots live a long, long time.
Coo and Ruff are doing fine.
Though they came from far away,
This is home. They're here to stay. ★

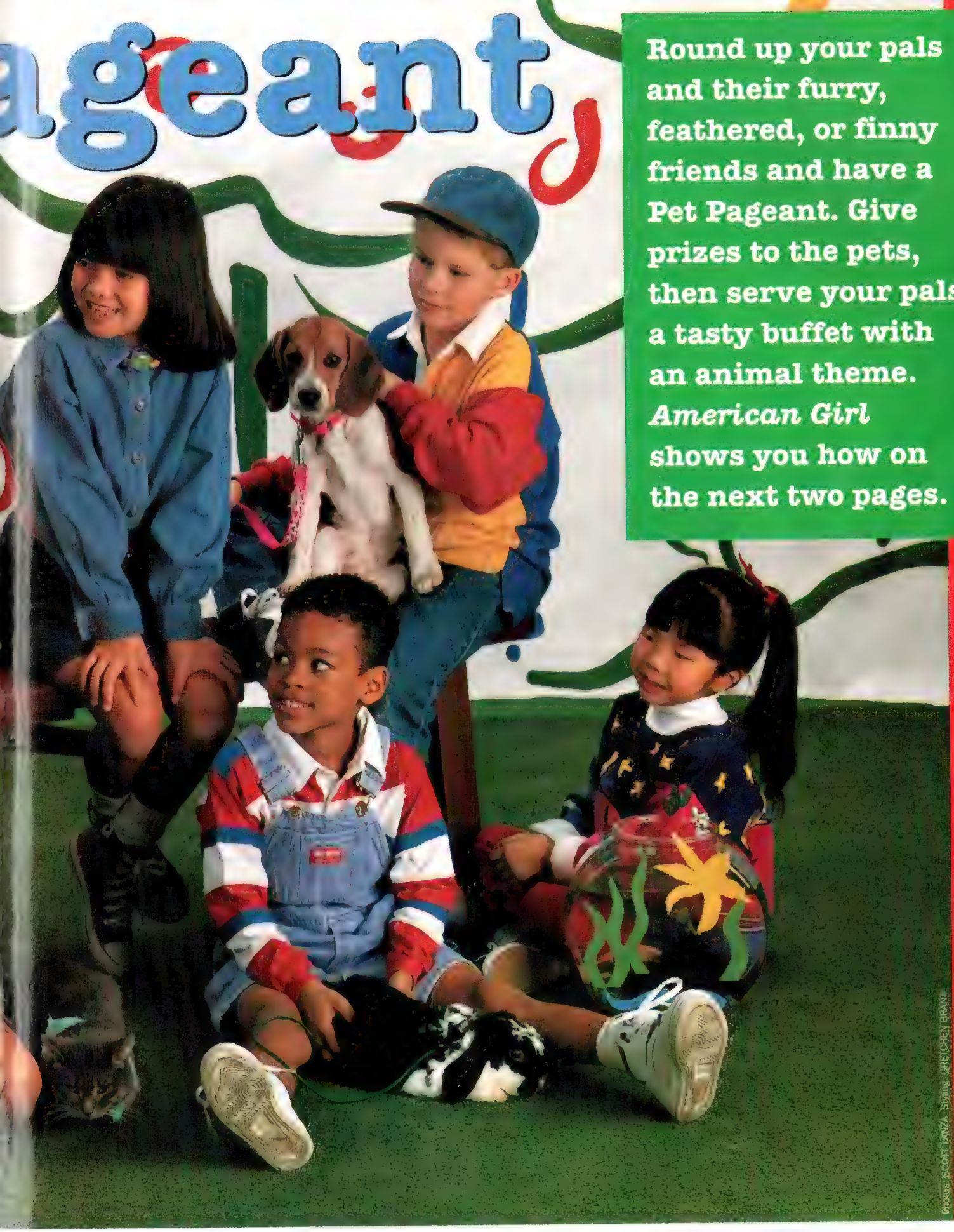
"Ruffle and Coo" is a true story. Twenty years ago a flock of captured parrots escaped from a crate and settled in this tree. And they're still there! This poem comes from a book sponsored by the Humane Society of the U.S. and produced by the Benefactory in Fairfield, Connecticut.

ted by Randy Houk

eyes shut. 41 **Why are lobsters like politicians?** ***Because they turn red when they're in hot water.***

 42 What do you call a cat that drinks lemonade? *A sour-puss!* 43 What did the porcupine say to the

ageant



Photos: SCOTT LANZA Styling: GRETCHEN BRAN

Round up your pals and their furry, feathered, or finny friends and have a Pet Pageant. Give prizes to the pets, then serve your pals a tasty buffet with an animal theme. *American Girl* shows you how on the next two pages.

Invitation

A Pageant For Your Pets

And A Party For You!

Send your friends a dog-bone invitation. Fold a piece of construction paper in half. On one side, draw a bone whose edges reach the fold. Cut out the bone through both layers of paper without cutting the fold. Print your party plans inside. Remember to tell your friends to dress up their pets and bring their families.

Label the food with cute critter signs: Create an animal cutout for each dish using construction paper. On it, write the name of the food. Cut slits near the top and bottom. Slip the animal onto a straw and place the straw in the food.

Awards

To make prizes for the winners of the Pet Pageant, wrap dog biscuits in foil and glue them to ribbons. Then write the name of an award on each ribbon with a paint pen. Have pets compete for Wettest Nose, Best Dressed, Best Hairdo, Best Smile, Friendliest, and any other things you can dream up.

Animal Napkins

Turn to page 38 of *American Girl* to see how a few simple folds can transform paper napkins into dogs, cats, and rabbits.

 45 **What has the head of a cat, the tail of a cat, but is not a cat?** ***A kitten.*** 46 **How do you keep a dog**

To make pet plates, just cut goofy animal ears out of construction paper and paste them to the backs of paper plates.

Aquarium Cups

Ingredients:

2 cups water
1 6-ounce box Berry Blue Jell-O gelatin
20 jelly-candy fish

Directions:

- Follow directions on the back of the box.
- Let the mixture cool off. Pour it into clear plastic cups.
- Put the cups in the refrigerator and chill until slightly firm. Push two or three fish into each cup.
- Chill until completely firm.

Animal Tree

Ingredients:

1 roll of dough for peanut-butter cookies, from the refrigerator section of your local grocery
You will also need a flowerpot, a silver bucket, some branches, parsley, and a Styrofoam ball.

Directions:

- Roll out dough. Cut out cookies with animal-shaped cookie cutters. Poke holes in dough with a straw and bake, following instructions on the package.
- Let cookies cool. Put ribbons through the holes.
- Put Styrofoam ball in flowerpot. Put pot in bucket. Stick branches into ball and cover ball with parsley. Tie cookies onto each branch.

off the road? ***Put it in a barking lot.*** 47 **What does a llama have that nothing else has?** ***Baby llamas.***

Games &

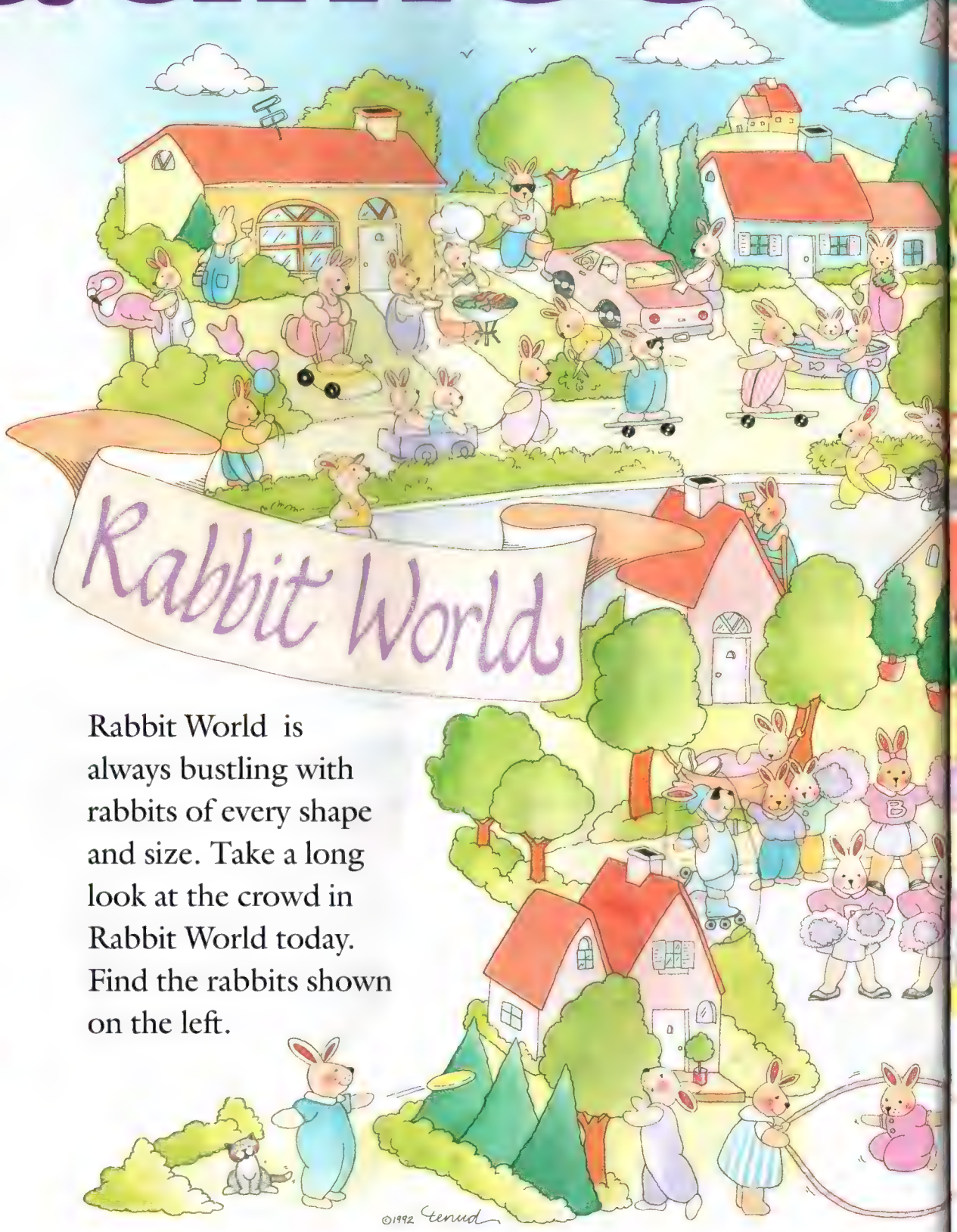
Roller Rabbit

Reading Rabbit

Running Rabbit

Ribbons Rabbit

4. Why did Rachel get out of bed in the middle of the night?



Rabbit World is always bustling with rabbits of every shape and size. Take a long look at the crowd in Rabbit World today. Find the rabbits shown on the left.

©1992 Grenud

48 **Where do you find a hippopotamus?** ***It depends on where you left it.*** 49 **Why does a giraffe have**

Giggles

Illustration: TISH TENUD

such a long neck? ***Because its head is so far from its body.***

50 **What time is it when an elephant sits**

Animal Word Search

These 28 animal names are hidden below: bat, bird, buffalo, cat, dog, duck, elephant, emu, fish, gerbil, goose, hog, horse, leopard, lion, lizard, monkey, moose, mouse, owl, ox, pig, rabbit, raccoon, ram, snake, squirrel, and zebra. Some names read up and down. Some read left to right. Some read diagonally. How many names can you find?

L	S	D	U	C	K	B	U	F	F	A	L	O
Y	I	M	O	U	S	E	D	B	I	S	R	T
P	A	Z	F	G	E	R	B	I	L	T	B	M
G	L	E	L	Q	P	T	H	R	W	R	D	O
O	I	B	F	I	S	H	P	D	T	A	N	N
O	O	R	S	N	Z	K	A	L	O	B	T	K
S	N	A	K	E	P	A	E	M	U	B	M	E
E	N	C	B	P	L	C	R	E	S	I	W	Y
A	O	C	W	I	T	E	H	D	E	T	H	D
H	T	O	H	G	R	L	P	C	H	W	E	K
G	Y	O	K	W	A	T	H	H	S	A	S	R
W	T	N	P	O	X	S	L	O	A	R	C	H
S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	R	G	N	A	N
L	E	O	P	A	R	D	C	S	B	A	T	Q
F	R	I	S	M	O	O	S	E	I	O	W	L

Illustration: TISH TENUD

Lucky

Credits on page 2.

on a park bench? *Time to fix the bench.* 51 What is black and white and has sixteen wheels? *A zebra*

Famous-Dog Quiz

Match the description to the dog. Write the right number in each box.

☐ Sandy

1. This dog's master worked at Spacely Space Sprockets. His family had a robot maid.

☐ Toto

2. This dog was the only real friend Little Orphan Annie had.

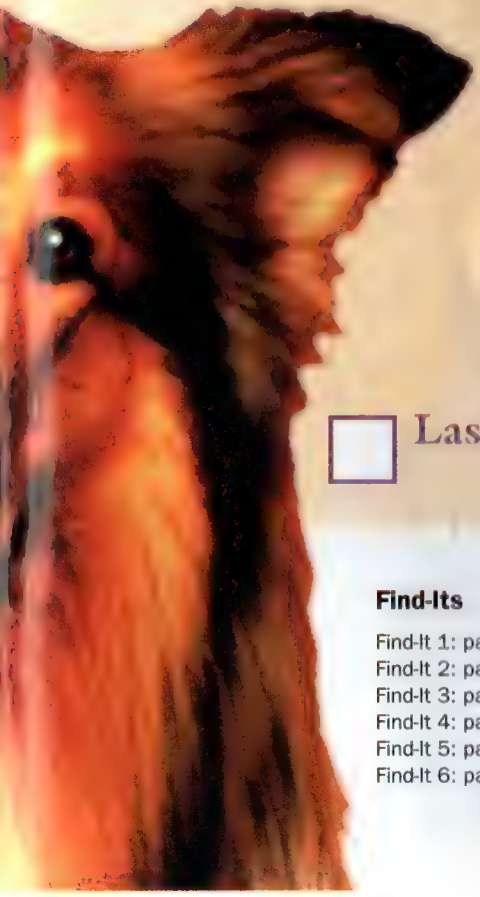
☐ Comet

3. After a howling tornado, this dog went for a walk down the yellow brick road.

☐ Beethoven

4. This world-famous collie starred in movies and had his own radio show. Each weekend, he flew to Hollywood in his own private plane.

5. This dog was kidnapped from his warm, safe pet store, and hid himself in a cold, damp garbage can.



☐ Lassie

6. Of all his brothers and sisters, this puppy was the one who liked TV the best.

7. On this dog's first birthday, he barked hard enough to blow out the candle on his cake. He lives in a very crowded house.

☐ Astro

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Find-Its

Find-It 1: page 28.
Find-It 2: paper doll.
Find-It 3: page 49.
Find-It 4: page 15.
Find-It 5: page 21.
Find-It 6: page 25.

Answers to Games & Giggles

Famous-Dog Quiz

1—Astro
2—Sandy
3—Toto
4—Lassie
5—Beethoven
6—Lucky
7—Comet

Animal Word Search

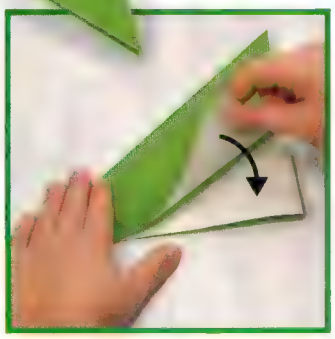
L S D U C K B U F F A L O
Y I M O U S E D B I S R T
P A Z P G E R B I L D T B M
G L E L O P T H R W R D O
O I B F I S H P D T A N N
O O R S N Z K A L O B T K
S N A K E P A E M U B M E
E N C B P L L C R E S I W V
A O C W I T E N D E T H D
H T O H G R L P C H W E K
G Y O K W A T H H S A S R
W T N P O X S L O A R C H
S Q U I R R E L R G N A N
L E O P A R D C S B A T O
F R I S M O O S E D I O W L

on roller skates. 52 **What kind of dog belongs to the catcher on a baseball team?** ***The catcher's mutt.***

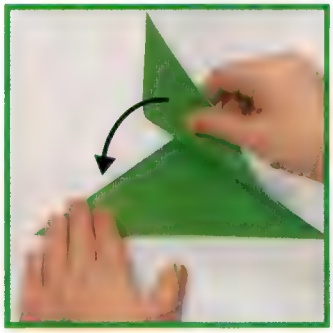
ANIMAL ORIGAMI

Make colorful origami animals out of squares of paper. Use square paper napkins to make the party napkins shown on page 32.

Dog



1. Fold square in half to make a triangle.

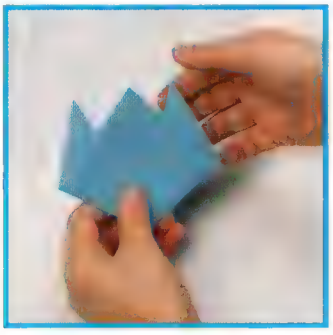


2. Fold triangle in half to make a smaller triangle.

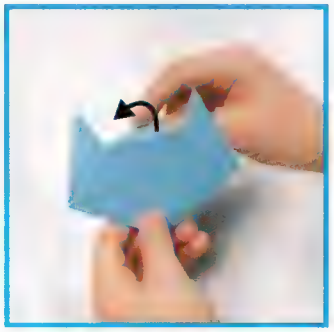
3. Fold each corner of the triangle down. The edges should not meet in the center.

4. Fold the top center point back.

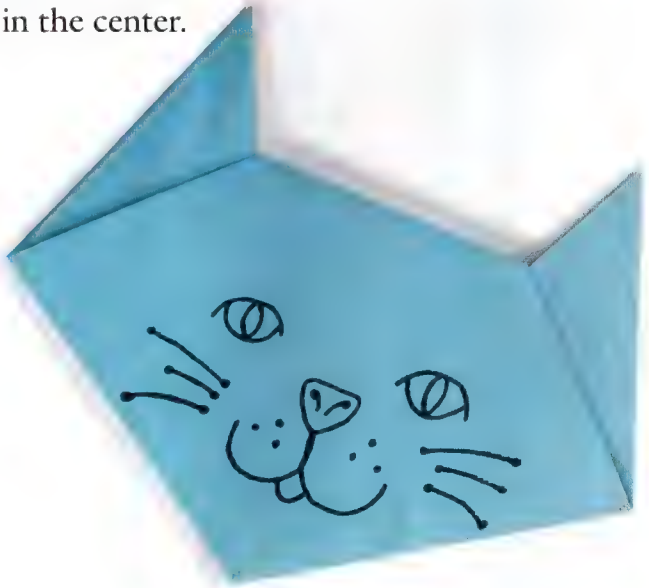
Cat



1. Do the first three steps you did to make the dog. Turn shape over and upside down.



2. Fold the top center point back.



5. Where did hamsters get their name?

53 What do you call it when a cat gets into the china cabinet? *A cat-astrophe.* 54 And when a dog goes

Rabbit

1. Fold square in half to make a triangle.

2. Fold triangle in half to make a smaller triangle.

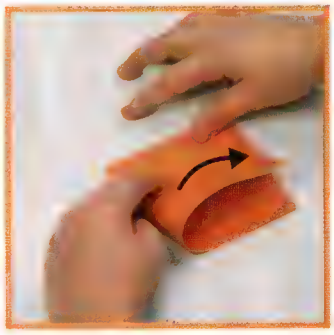
3. Fold the long edge of the triangle up. The shape will look like a hat with a brim.

4. Fold the long edges up, one at a time. The edges will meet in the center.

5. Turn shape over. Fold top center point back and tuck in front of ears.

Goldfish

1. Fold square in half to make a rectangle.



2. Fold rectangle in half to make a square. Undo to make this:

3. Hold upper right corner at fold. Lift to center. Press down to make this:

4. Turn shape over. Hold upper right corner at fold. Lift to center. Press down to make this:

5. Hold top layer of right point. Fold back and down to make this:

6. Hold top layer of left point. Fold back and down to make this: Turn it over.

Photos: Sutter Photography

Illustrated by
Dan Andreasen

 56 **What kind of makeup does a cat wear to a party?** ***Kitty glitter.*** 57 **How do you save a drowning**

Felicity Takes a Dare

By Valerie Tripp

It's spring! The fair is in town. Felicity knows that today will be a day she'll never forget. And she's right!

"Look at me!" cried Felicity Merriman. "I'm a high-wire dancer, just like at the fair!"

Felicity climbed onto the fence as her sister Nan and brother William watched. The old fence was unsteady, but Felicity held her arms out from her sides, found her balance, and walked heel-toe, heel-toe along the top of it. Then she stood on one foot and gracefully pointed the toe of the other foot in front of her.

"You *do* look like the high-wire dancers, Lissie," said Nan. "Oh, I can't wait to see them at the fair today!"

"I want to see everything," said Felicity. "Especially the racehorses."

All through the winter, everyone in Williamsburg looked forward to the spring fair. People came to town from near and far to enjoy the

music and dancing, to see the prize animals, and to watch the races and contests. Today the fair was finally here, and no one was more excited than Felicity. Today was also the day after her ninth birthday. Felicity couldn't help feeling that the fair was a special celebration just for her, in honor of her being one year older.

I'm nine years old, thought Felicity. I can do lots of things Nan and William can't.

Nan and Felicity were supposed to be minding William and hemming aprons while they waited to go to the fair. But Felicity preferred walking a pretend high-wire to stitching an apron. Now she rose up on her toes and spun around to walk along the shaky fence in the other direction.

Nan stopped stitching to clap, and William, who was only two, demanded, "Me, too, Lissie! Up!"

Felicity laughed and said, "Very well, William. Come on, Nan. Help William up onto the fence."

"He's too little," said Nan, who was six. "I don't think—"

"Up!" repeated William.

"Don't worry, Nan," said Felicity, looking down at her. "I'll help him."

Nan sighed. She stood behind William and tried to lift him up. But William was too heavy. His weight made Nan stumble back, then fall *thump!* on the muddy ground. Felicity jumped down off the fence to help. Unluckily, she landed in a puddle and spattered cold, wet mud on them all.

Nan wailed in dismay. William, who liked mud, shrieked with delight, "Again! Again!"

All the noise brought Mrs. Merriman rushing from the house. "Children!" she exclaimed. "What on earth are you doing?"

"All fall down!" crowed William.

"So I see!" said Mrs. Merriman. She looked exasperated. "What happened, Felicity?"

"Well, Nan was trying to lift William," Felicity explained as she brushed the mud off her petticoat. "But he was too heavy, and so they both fell. That's all."

"Lissie, you *told* me to lift him," Nan said, "so he could walk on the fence with you."

"Were you walking on that rickety fence, Felicity?" asked Mrs. Merriman. "What dangerous nonsense! 'Tis lucky you didn't break your neck when you fell off."

"*I* didn't fall," said Felicity. "Only Nan and William—"

"Felicity," interrupted Mrs. Merriman. "You are just as muddy as Nan and William. I can see that all three of you have been up to something foolish and dangerous. You are the eldest. You ought to know there's a difference between being brave and being foolhardy. Now go change your clothes. Then finish hemming your aprons, girls. We won't go to the fair until they are done."

"Yes, Mother," said Felicity and Nan.

Felicity felt cross all the while she was changing her clothes. *I didn't fall,* she thought. *Walking on the fence wasn't dangerous for me. I'm nine years old. I can do lots of things Nan and William can't. Father promised that I could go with him to the fireworks tonight. Nan and William are still too young.*

When Felicity was dressed, she picked up her apron and started hemming it again. But as she became more and more impatient to go to the fair, her stitching became faster and faster and crookeder and crookeder. When at last the girls finished their hems, they showed them to Mother.

"Your hem is fine, Nan," said Mother. "Yours is not perfection, Felicity. But it will

 lost your dog? *Dogs can't read.* 59 What do you call a snake that wiggles a lot? *Viper-active.* 60 What

have to do." She smiled. "I'm as eager to get to the fair as you are."

"Hurrah!" cheered Felicity and Nan as they ran to fetch their hats.

The streets were crowded with people heading toward Market Square, the big, open space in the middle of Williamsburg where tents and booths were set up. Felicity smelled wood smoke and heard laughter and music well before she could see the fair. She skipped ahead of Mother, pulling Nan along.

"Felicity," Mrs. Merriman warned. "Stay close to me."

"Look, Mother!" exclaimed Felicity when she saw a crowd gathering by the running field. "A footrace is starting. May we watch?"

Mother lifted William so he could see the racers line up. Felicity and Nan both shrieked with surprise at the loud *bang!* of the starting gun. They jumped and cheered so much that when the race was over, they felt as if they'd run it, too.

Felicity wanted to go look for the horses, but just then a group of tumblers appeared on the field. Nan clapped with delight and William tried to imitate their somersaults. After the tumblers, the high-wire dancers began. The children watched wide-eyed as they balanced on a wire strung between two poles.

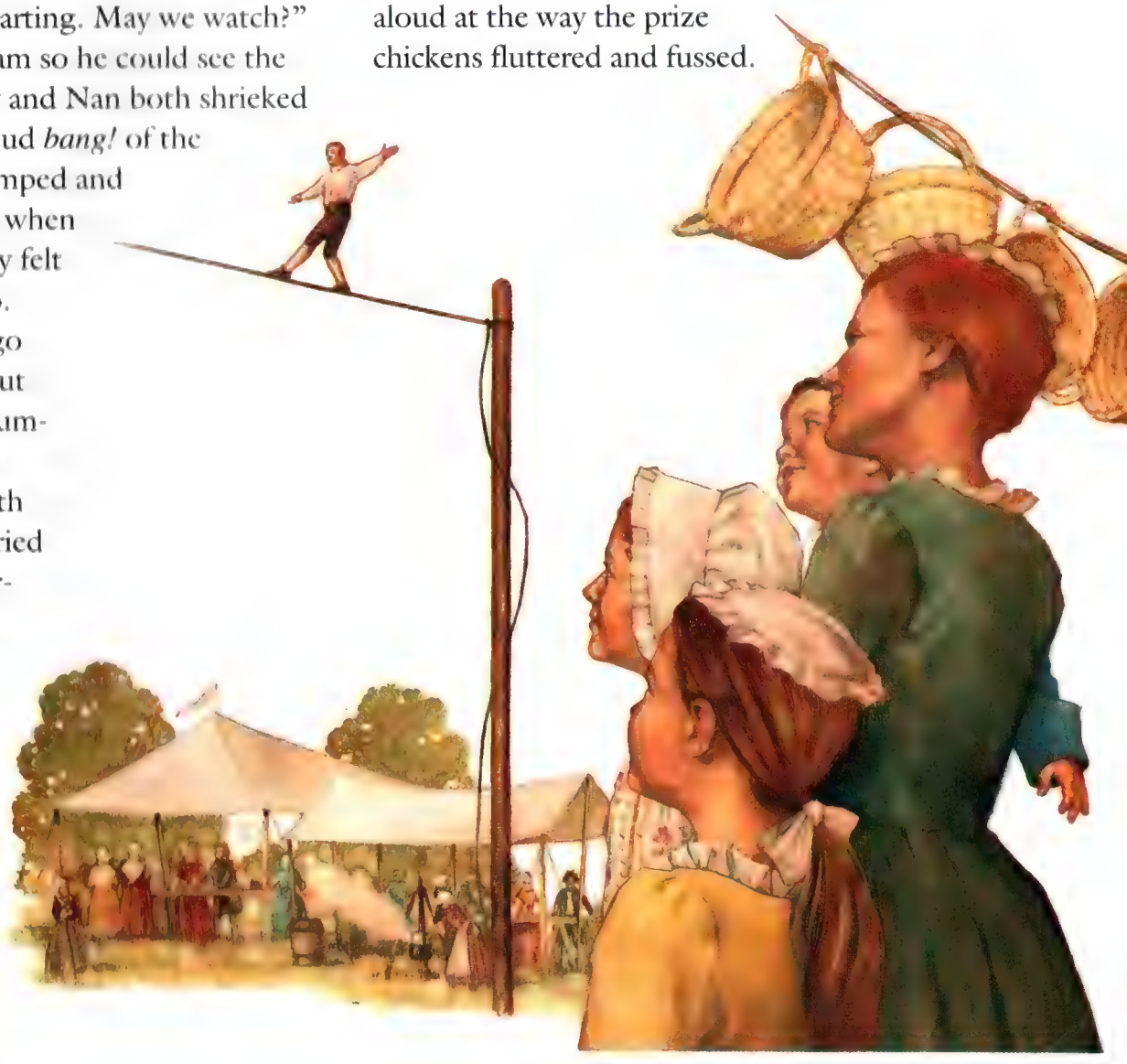
"The wire is much narrower than our fence," Nan said.

"Aye, and much higher, too," answered Felicity. "I'd love to try to walk on it."

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mother. "Just looking at it makes me dizzy. Come along to the fiddlers' tent. Let's listen to the music."

Mother, Felicity, and Nan clapped their hands and tapped their feet to the fiddle music, but William covered his ears. "Too squeaky!" he said.

Felicity was happy when they finally came to the pens for the prizewinning farm animals. She knew the racehorses must be nearby. She and Nan and William mooed at the friendly cows and gasped at the size of the huge oxen. The children admired the prize pig, who was fat and pink and peaceful, and laughed aloud at the way the prize chickens fluttered and fussed.



did one skunk say to the other? *You smell scent-sational.* 61 What prehistoric reptile was known for its

At a gaily decorated booth, Mother bought the children treats. Nan chose a tart. William chose gingerbread, which he dropped immediately. Felicity was too excited about seeing the horses to be hungry. She gave William some of the little cakes she had chosen and put the rest in her pocket.

Mother was dusting crumbs off William when her friend Mrs. Fitchett greeted her.

"Good day, Mrs. Fitchett," said Mrs. Merriman with a smile.

Mrs. Fitchett beamed. "Well, children. I'm sure you are enjoying the fair," she said. "And Mrs. Merriman, have you seen the display of embroidery stitches, just new from London? Come, I'll show you."

Felicity's heart sank. *Oh no!* she thought. *Not stitches! Not now, just when we're finally going to see the horses!*

> ***"I am not a coward," said Felicity.***

"Please, Mother," she blurted out. "May Nan and William and I go look at the horses? They're just over there." Felicity pointed to a grassy pasture surrounded by a wooden fence.

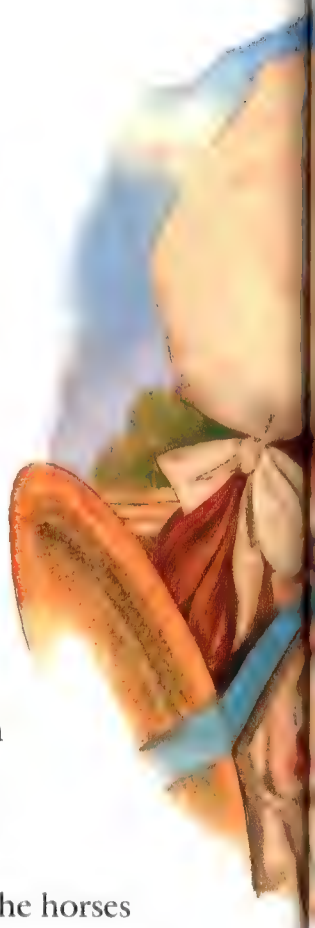
Mrs. Merriman started to say, "No, I—"

"Oh, let them go," cut in Mrs. Fitchett. "They'll come to no harm."

Mrs. Merriman hesitated. Then she said to the children, "Very well. I'll fetch you in a little while. Stay together."

"We will!" Felicity assured her. She hurried Nan and William over to the horse pen as fast as their legs could go.

Nan sat down on a stump to finish eating her tart, and William found a stick to poke into a mud puddle. Felicity leaned against the fence and shaded her eyes. She loved to look at horses. And these were not rough farm horses but sleek racehorses with slender legs and glossy coats. They trotted restlessly around the pen, tossing their shiny manes and flicking their long tails.



Felicity often rode the horses on her grandfather's plantation when she visited there. She was proud of the way she could make friends with horses. Grandfather had taught her to treat horses with respect, and they trusted her. She knew how to be loving and calm, especially with high-strung horses like these, which were easily upset by loud noises or sudden movement.

For a while, Felicity studied the horses in the pen, trying to decide which one she'd choose for her own if she could. She was jolted out of her daydream by a pack of noisy boys coming up to the pen. She recognized some of them from church, though they were certainly acting differently here. They ripped up handfuls of grass, waved them, and shouted at the horses to come eat from their hands. The nervous horses trotted away to the farthest corner of the pen, but the boys ran after them outside the fence, still yelling.

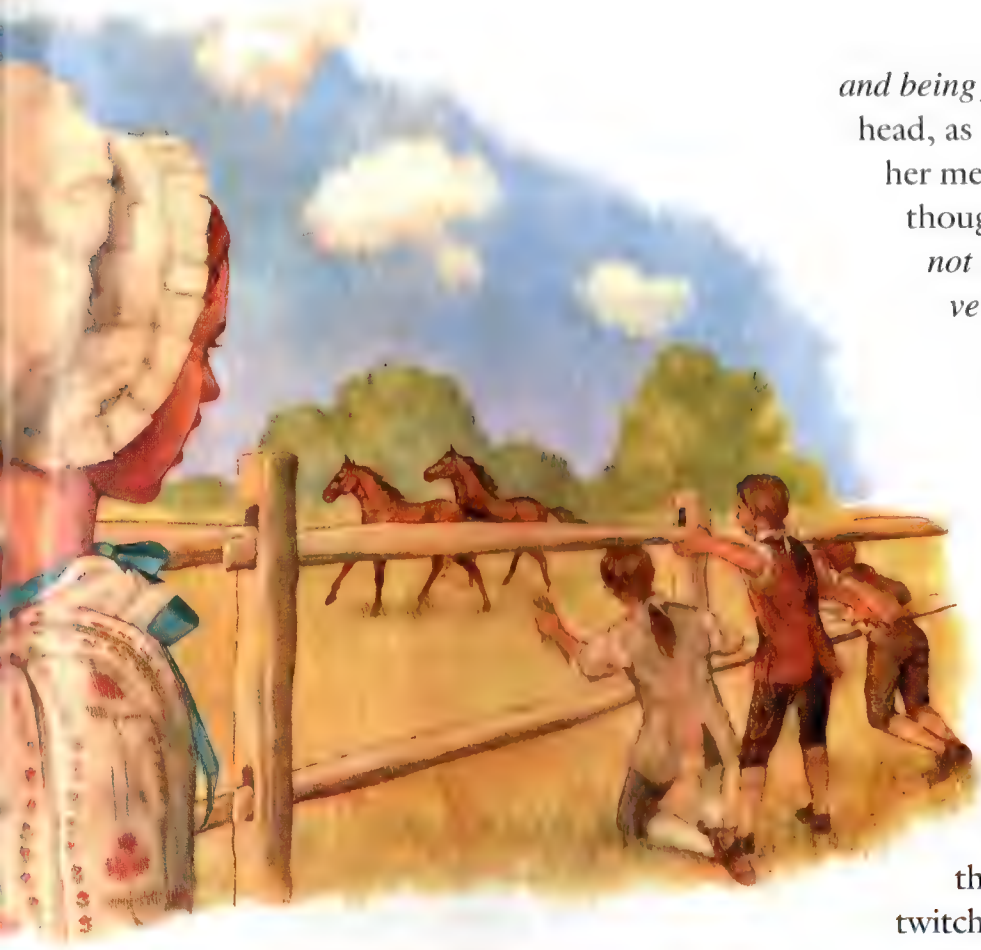
Nan and William stood up and moved closer to Felicity. She glared at the boys and frowned fiercely. "You boys!" she said. "Stop! You're scaring the horses!"

A few of the boys quieted down, but the largest one smirked at Felicity. Then he spoke to the others in a high voice, imitating her. "You boys! Stop! You're scaring these babies!"

The boys laughed. "Right you are, Robert!" one called out.

Robert crossed his arms. "So," he said to

 scary night sounds? *The dino-snore.* 62 What magazine do cats read? *Good Mousekeeping.* 63 Why



Felicity in a mean, teasing voice. "These boys are scaring you, aren't they?"

"Not at all!" said Felicity.

"What ails you, then?" sneered Robert. "Are you scared of the big horses?"

"No!" said Felicity. "I am not the least bit scared of the horses."

"You don't fool me," said Robert. "You're just a coward, like all girls."

"I am *not* a coward," said Felicity. She felt Nan touch her arm, but she ignored it.

"You are too," said Robert.

"I am *not!*" said Felicity, furious.

"Well, then," said Robert. "If you're so brave, I dare you to feed one of those horses."

Felicity hesitated. A small voice inside her warned that it was foolish to take any dare, and that taking this one would be downright dangerous, because she did not know these horses. She remembered her mother's warning: *There's a difference between being brave and being foolhardy.* Felicity shook her head, as if to shake Mother's words out of her memory. *I am nine years old,* she thought. *Making friends with horses is not risky for me. It's something I'm very good at.*

"Go on," said Robert. "I dare you."

Without another thought, Felicity jumped down from the fence into the pen. The horses eyed her, tossing their heads and shifting anxiously.

"Go on," said Robert.

"Be quiet," Felicity hissed. Slowly, she took the little cakes out of her pocket and stretched her arm out toward the horses, the cakes in her open palm. Muscles twitched in the horses' legs and necks as they watched her.

Felicity walked steadily forward. "Look what I have for you," she murmured. The horses pricked their ears toward her. "Don't be afraid," she said softly. "See? Cakes."

Slowly, Felicity walked closer and closer to the horses. She could smell them. She could feel the earth tremble when they stamped their feet and backed away from her. Still she walked closer.

One horse stretched out its neck toward her. Felicity stood absolutely still. The horse took one step and then another nearer to her. Felicity held her hand steady. Slowly, the horse bent its head lower. She could feel its warm breath on her hand. When the horse leaned down and began to eat the cakes out of her hand, Felicity turned her head to flash a triumphant look at Robert.

BOOM! A gunshot cracked the air. Felicity thought, *They must be starting another race.* Then everything happened at once. The horse

eating out of her hand reared up and kicked its front feet wildly. Felicity shrank back. At the same time the other horses charged toward her, madly scrambling, running into one another, snorting, lunging every which way.

"Lissie!" screamed Nan. Felicity turned to run, but one of the horses brushed past her so that she stumbled, then another knocked her down to the wet, cold ground with such force that she lay gasping. She tried to pick herself up, but another horse thundering past kicked her arm so hard Felicity heard a *crack*. A stab of pain shot up her arm. There was a rushing sound in her ears. Nan's cries and the boys' shouts seemed far away.

Felicity bit her lip to keep from crying out and struggled to her feet. By now the horses were on the far side of the pen.

Felicity staggered toward the fence, bent over, holding her hurt arm to her chest. She didn't stop until she had crawled through the fence, out of the pen. Then she slumped against a fence pole, looked at Nan's frightened face, and whispered, "Go get Mother."

Felicity was carried home and put to bed. Mr. Galt, the apothecary, was sent for. When he walked into the room, Mother said, "Lissie, my love, Mr. Galt is here to see to your arm now."

Felicity sat up, but the pain was so great she gasped.

"Lie back," said Mr. Galt kindly. "Move slowly, or it will hurt."

Mr. Galt told Mother to hold Felicity's elbow and wrist. He grasped Felicity's forearm where it was most swollen. Gently but firmly, he

pulled with his hands. "I'm moving the bone back into place," he said. It hurt so much, Felicity couldn't help whimpering. "You've a simple break," Mr. Galt explained. "But there's quite a bit of swelling. I'm going to use leeches to bring the swelling down."

Felicity closed her eyes. She couldn't bear to watch Mr. Galt put the dark leeches on her skin. She felt tiny bites on her arm as the leeches attached themselves and then began sucking the blood from her swollen bruises.

When the swelling had gone down, Mr. Galt removed the leeches. They were fat with blood. He put a splint on Felicity's arm and tied it securely with a wide bandage. Then he slipped Felicity's arm into a sling made of leather lined with wool. "Your mother may bathe your arm from time to time," he said. "But otherwise you must keep your arm in the sling day and night for six weeks and try not to move it at all."

Mr. Galt gave Felicity some medicine to help her sleep. As she closed her eyes, he said, "Don't worry, Mrs. Merriman. Felicity's arm should mend quickly and well."

When Felicity woke up a few hours later, Mother was sitting next to her bed. She asked quietly, "How do you feel, Lissie?"

Felicity swallowed hard. She knew Mother was asking how her arm felt, but she chose to answer, "I feel ashamed. Taking the dare was a foolish thing to do."

"Nan told me about the boy," said Mother. "He was wrong to dare you."

"I was wrong," said Felicity. Her eyes filled with tears. "I didn't think your warning was meant for me, but it was. You were right, Mother. I'm not brave, I'm just foolhardy."

"No, my love," said Mother. "I saw you be very brave when Mr. Galt was setting your arm."

"I was so proud of being nine," said Felicity. "I was so looking forward to going to the fireworks tonight."

"Come," said Mother. Carefully, she helped Felicity into a chair by the window. "You'll see the fireworks from here. That will cheer you."

Felicity's eyes filled with tears. "I didn't think your warning was for me, but it was."

Mother was right. A brilliant burst of yellow light lit the dark sky, and the sight did make Felicity feel better. She brushed the tears off her cheeks and smiled. "Thank you, Mother," she said.

"That's my good girl," said Mother. Then she grinned. "And here is something else to cheer you. You won't have to do any stitching while your arm's in a sling!"

Felicity and her mother laughed. Then they sat in the dark room together, watching fireworks streak across the night sky. ★

6. What are jodhpurs?

Now

Meet the Author

Valerie Tripp

When I was eight, a carnival came to our town. Our family went the first night. I had saved my nickels for weeks to buy popcorn and tickets for the rides. I liked the Ferris wheel best. From the top I could look down on the lights of our town twinkling in the summer night. It was as if there were stars above me and below me, too.

At 8

P.S. *Felicity Takes a Dare*

LEECHES

If you got sick in colonial America, you wouldn't have to worry about getting a shot from the doctor, but the apothecary might stop by your house with a few leeches.

Leeches are small wormlike animals that survive by sucking blood from bigger animals. In colonial times, people believed that all kinds of medical problems, from headaches to high fever, came from having too much blood. Apothecaries thought they could cure their patients by bleeding them—that is, by getting rid of the extra blood. Using leeches was one way to do it.

If a girl like Felicity broke her arm, the apothecary might put several leeches on the swelling. If she had a really bad headache, the apothecary might put leeches up her nose.

Compared with many other medical treatments of the day, leeching was fairly painless. The only problem was, it didn't work. No one realized it back then, but losing blood actually makes people weaker and sicker.

The leeches used in colonial America were collected overseas, in Europe. There, a leech gatherer would wade bare-legged through a stream. After a while, his legs would be covered with leeches. He would pick the leeches off and put them in a jar. Later he would sell them to someone who would ship them to America, where every apothecary shop kept a jar full of leeches waiting for the next patient. ★

Photo: Animals Animals © Robert Maier

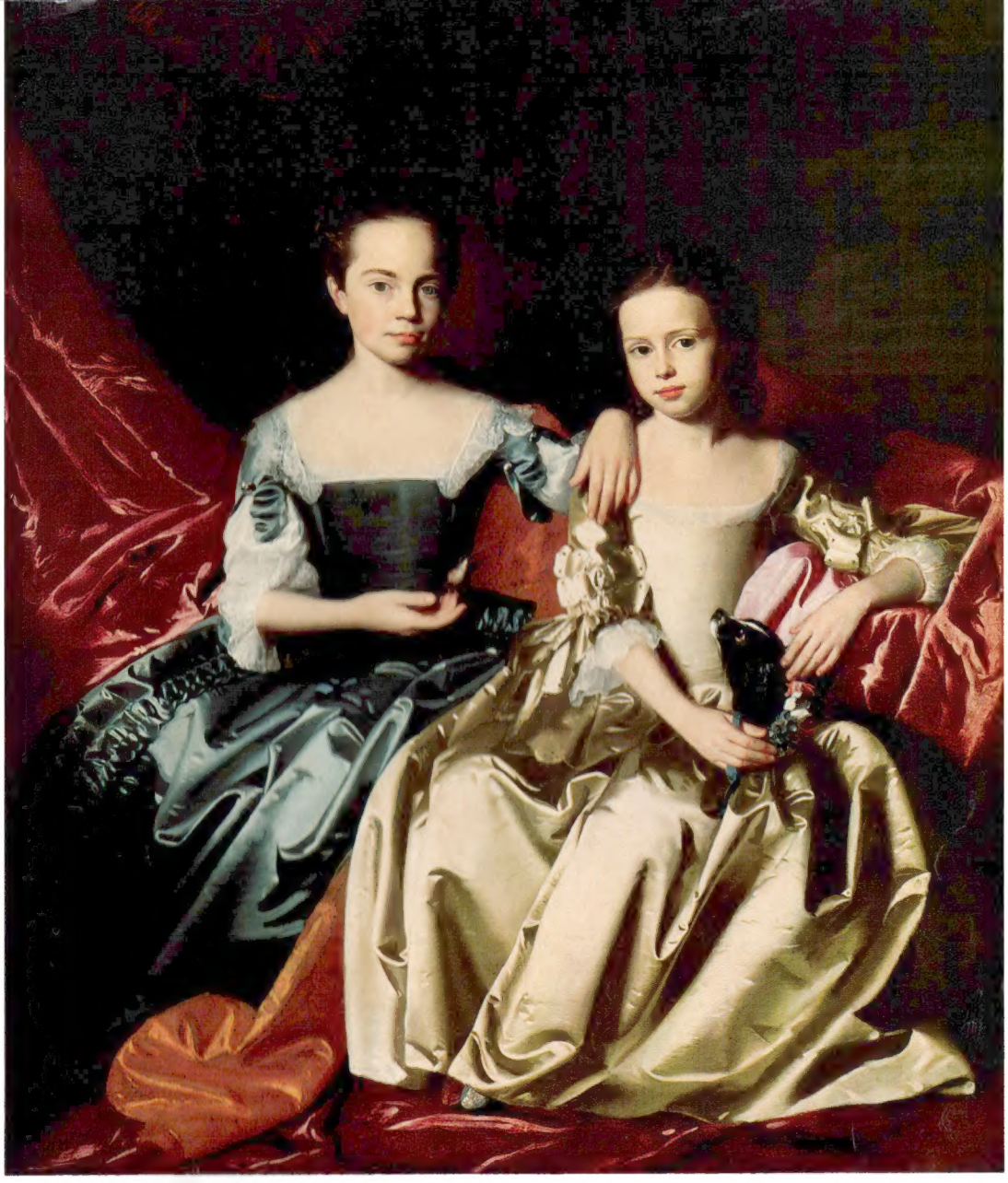
The leech on the right is normal size. If it were full of blood it would be the size of the leech on the left.

Colonial drugstores were called apothecary shops. Apothecaries sold medicine and acted as family doctors.

Illustration: National Library of Medicine. Photo: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

In colonial America, people thought they got sick because they had too much blood. They used leeches to get rid of some of it.

66 **What is gray, has big ears, a long trunk, and weighs only three pounds?** ***A very, very thin elephant.***



Julia Knight Fox Fund. Courtesy, Boston Museum of Fine Arts

Mary and Elizabeth Royall, by John Singleton Copley, 1758

IMAGINE

that you and your pet dog are having your portrait painted.

Except you don't have a pet dog. The year is 1758. You are 11-year-old Elizabeth Royall, and you live near Boston. One day you put on a gold dress and sit quietly beside your older sister Mary while Mr. John Singleton Copley paints your portrait. Your hands are empty, but the finished painting shows a dog on your lap and a hummingbird perched on Mary's finger.

The animals in the painting are *attributes,* or clues that the artist put in the picture to tell something special about the people in the painting. The dog might mean that you are a lively young girl who would rather be playing with a puppy than sitting in a parlor. And the hummingbird? Maybe it suggests that Mary's childhood is flying away.

Now think about yourself, as you really are, today. If you were having *your* portrait painted, what attribute might you be holding? ★

Coming up in the May/June issue of

American girl™

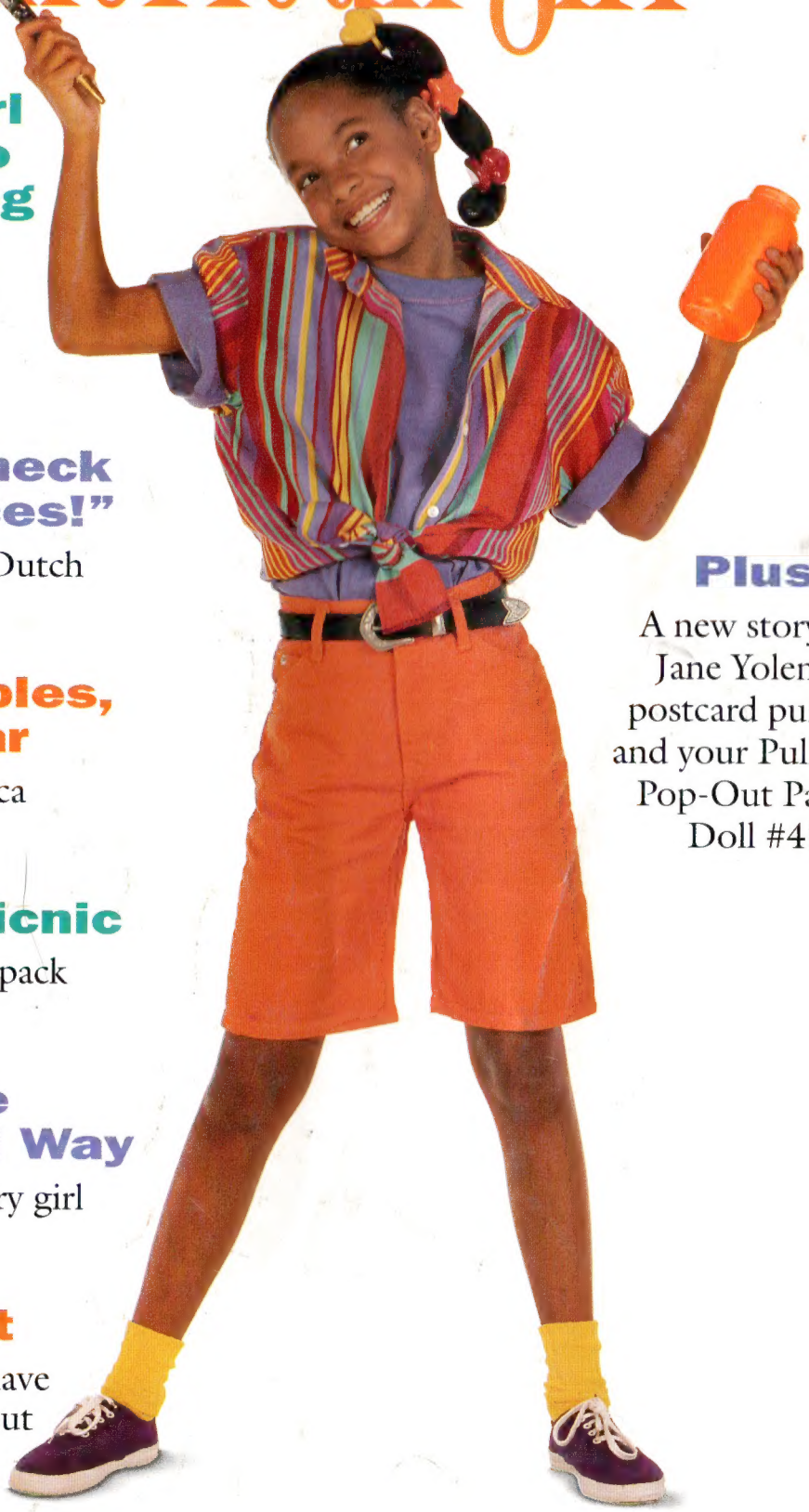


Photo: PAUL TRYBA

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